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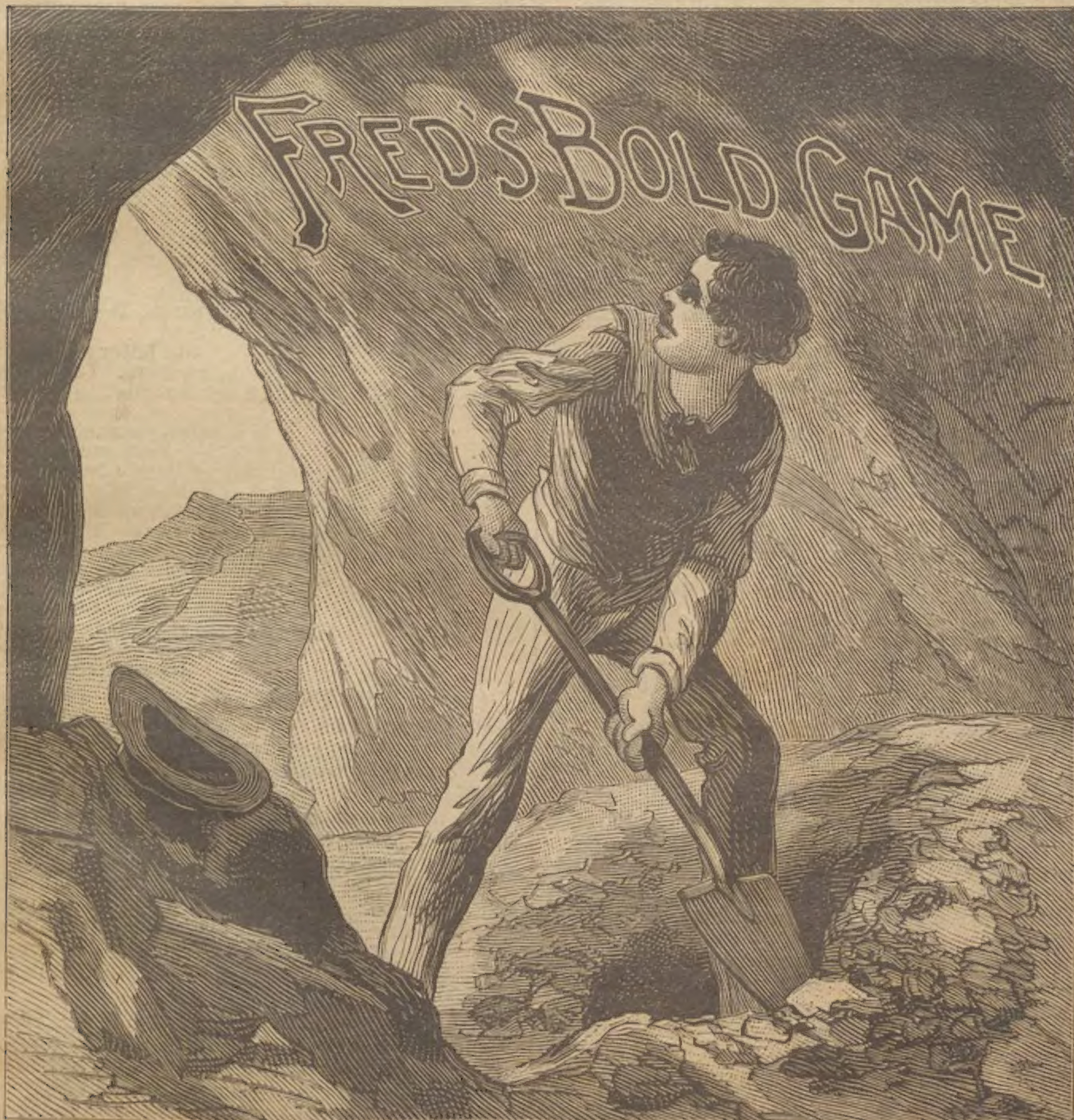
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A TERRIFIC SOUND CAUSED HIM TO STOP ON THE INSTANT. IT WAS THE HOARSE
ROAR OF CANNON.

Fred's Bold Game;

OR,

THE CAVE TREASURE.

BY PAUL BIBBS.

CHAPTER I.

THE TORN LETTER.

ON the 14th day of July, A. D. 1853, the schooner Achilles dropped her anchor just outside the harbor of Port au Prince. Almost immediately afterward, a boat, containing six seamen—and a seventh, whose dress showed him to be their captain—was lowered from the ship's side, and, after a vigorous row of ten minutes, approached the quay. The captain, springing lightly ashore, ordered his men to return immediately to the vessel, at the same time admonishing them that he would be ready to return in about three hours. He spoke in French. It was then about six in the evening.

The captain was a man of perhaps forty years of age. In stature he was almost gigantic. His hair and beard—both were uncommonly long—were black as jet. His eyes were dark and observant in general, but capable of becoming, at times, lit up with a fierce and relentless glow of passion. His name was Jacques Montbars.

The captain had no sooner seen the boat commence its return to the schooner, then he bent his footsteps toward the town.

He seemed to be desirous of avoiding the more thronged thoroughfares, and, after wending his way at a rapid pace through three or four back-streets, he suddenly turned a corner. This move brought him in close proximity to a low, flat-roofed building, over the door of which hung a rude sign-board. Upon this could be read, "Red Lion Inn."

After glancing about him in a quick, suspicious manner, and feeling that no one was particularly noticing his movements, Montbars entered the open doorway. Here he was met face to face by the innkeeper, a small-statured, good-natured Englishman.

"Well, Newton," said the former, somewhat familiarly, and in English, but with a very strong French accent, "has Pierre arrived?"

"Yes, Captain Montbars. He arrived about ten minutes ago."

"Very good. Show me to him at once."

Followed by the sea-captain, the innkeeper led the way into a small, dimly-lighted apartment, situated in the rear end of the building. The captain then motioned Newton to withdraw himself, which he did, closing the door behind him.

In the center of the floor stood a table, finely carved, and magnificent in its proportions, being no doubt some great family heirloom. Upon the table was a decanter, half-full of wine, two or three glasses, and a small, dimly-burning copper lamp. At the table was seated a man who held in his hands a piece of torn and crumpled paper, covered with small, neatly-finished handwriting. This he was evidently endeavoring to decipher, and so intent was he

upon his object that the entrance of Montbars failed to arrest his attention. It was not until he was tapped gently upon the shoulder that he was aware of the other's presence.

"Ha! captain," exclaimed he, looking quickly about him, "you tread as softly as a cat. I did not hear you enter."

The language used was French, which, judging from the speaker's looks, was his native tongue. He was a young man, not past his twenty-fifth year, and of small size and stature, his every movement showing him to be as quick and agile as a cat. His name was Pierre, surnamed by his countrymen The Savage.

"Well, Pierre," said Montbars, "what is that you are trying to decipher, eh? Some love-epistle?"

"Love-epistle!" laughed the other. "Ha! ha! What damsel think you, my handsome captain, would address lines of love to me? No, captain," he continued, his face assuming an expression of intense earnestness, "this piece of paper may be half the means by which I can become a man of wealth and position."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Montbars, seating himself at the table, and directly opposite The Savage; "how is that?"

"I will explain. But before I do so, you had better see what you can make of this? It will, no doubt, puzzle you somewhat."

Handing Montbars the piece of torn paper, the captain approached near enough to the lamp to enable him to read as follows:

"AU PRINCE, Dec. 5th, 16—

"Son:

this letter reaches its
be no more. I am dying
the fever is scorching my very

is now ten years since I left
the time have succeeded in
fortune consisting of diamonds, gold and
of upward of fifty thousand
This I have buried in order that none
possibly discover it About three
there is a cave known as the "Robber's"
take twenty paces from the
forward one hundred
after digging down a foot
stone marked thus XLI. Beneath
Adieu, my son, forever,
"JAMES LORRAINE."

"Well," said Pierre, as soon as he perceived that Montbars had finished the perusal of the paper, "what do you make of it?"

"Nothing," was the answer.

"Ha!" said Pierre, rubbing his hands together, as if in great glee. "If your brain were a thousand times larger than it is, you could not solve the mystery of that piece of paper."

"There is certainly some mystery connected with it," said the captain; "but, as you say, that mystery I do not possess the power to fathom. The writer, James Lorraine, I knew well. He was an Englishman, and presumed to be the richest man in Hispaniola."

"So I have heard before. But listen. This is one half of the last letter he wrote to his son just previous to his death, and in which he gave such directions as would enable his son to easily discover where he had secreted his immense riches. The son no sooner received his father's letter, than he set sail for Hispaniola, where, I have

learned, he now is. As yet, I have never seen him. It appears—"

"How, then," interrupted Montbars, "came you to possess this half of his father's letter?"

"Patience, captain, and I will explain."

"It appears that young Lorraine has a cousin, whom the elder Lorraine received into his house when a young boy, and caused him to be educated with his own son. Well, I am somewhat acquainted—it is but very recently that we first met—with this cousin, and it is from him that I received that piece of paper. How he came by it, I know not, exactly. But, judging from what I have heard from others, the cousin must have obtained it by force, as the other portion is retained by young Lorraine."

"Well?" said Montbars, perceiving that The Savage hesitated; "proceed."

"Well, I am offered a third interest in The treasure, if I succeed in obtaining the other half of that letter."

"Indeed! Is that all—a third, only?"

"All! *Mon Dieu!* Is it not enough?"

"Why not take the whole? If you do succeed in obtaining what you are striving to, you have simply to remove the treasure, without saying a word to any one, and it is yours."

"True!" exclaimed Pierre, his face suddenly presenting an aspect of cunning. "I did not think of that before."

"But you must be wary how you act," said Montbars, by way of caution. "If young Lorraine takes after his father, you will find that you have no ordinary man to cope with. Old Lorraine was a man at least three inches taller than what I am, and a great deal more muscular. He had the strength of a giant, and the temper of a fiend, when once fully roused. Where does this son of his keep himself?"

"Ha! That question I am unable to answer. I have made numerous inquiries of him, but, as yet, I have never obtained the slightest clew to his whereabouts."

"Well, Pierre," said Montbars, pulling forth a magnificent timepiece, and looking at it, "time flies fast. Let us now proceed with the business that brought me here. When did you see Jongsbay last?"

"This morning."

"You delivered my message, then?"

"To the letter."

"Well, his answer?"

"His answer was this: Mademoiselle Hautville had an interview with him some five days ago, and promised that she would like the pleasure of your company on the 15th—to-morrow."

"Zounds!" exclaimed Montbars, springing to his feet, and beginning to pace the floor. "That is unfortunate, as to-morrow night I ought to be miles away from here. I have just received the information that a Spanish galleon, laden with treasure to almost her very bulwarks, Pierre, sails for Spain on the morrow. Still, as Therese has promised to see me, I'll not disappoint her, though by so doing I may be the loser of thousands of doubloons."

"Well said, noble captain," cried Pierre. "Truly, you must love the girl beyond all measure."

"I do, Pierre, I do. I loved her madly from the first instant my eyes fell upon her. But, my

friend," continued the speaker, pausing in his walk up and down the floor, and moderating his voice to almost a whisper, "sometimes of late, there is a feeling of apprehension that steals over my spirits when I think of her. Oh, God! Sometimes I am inclined to think that Therese and I are to part: and, if my fears prove in the end to be true, then God help me!"

"Ay," responded Pierre, "and her, too. Were I you, and were I to see Therese discard me for another, I would shoot her as being unworthy a better fate!"

"No, Pierre," said Montbars, a smile illuminating the troubled expression of his handsome face, "you would not. That only shows jealousy. A man that truly loves a woman can never draw a weapon on her, do what she may. But my fears may exist only in my fancy. Therese may be true as I."

Montbars then bade him good-night, and disappeared from the room.

CHAPTER II.

THERESE HAUTVILLE.

THE residence of M. Hautville, one of the most wealthy merchants in Port au Prince, was situated some two miles out beyond the town limits. In the best-furnished apartment the house contained were seated two persons—a young man of perhaps twenty-six, and a female some five or more years his junior.

It was the evening of the night succeeding the events recorded in the last chapter—the evening of the 15th.

The young man before mentioned was dark-complexioned, with coarse, straight black hair, and possessed of a pair of small, dark eyes, in which suspicion, cunning and treachery were plainly depicted. In fact, cunning and treachery were to be traced in every feature of his physiognomy. He was an Englishman, and dressed in a garb, which, at that day, was considered as being fashionable in the highest degree.

The young man's name was Fred Lorraine.

She who was seated on the sofa at his side was considered by many admirers to be the most beautiful girl on the island. She was somewhat above the medium stature, dark-complexioned, large dark eyes, full of fire and subdued venom, a finely-formed nose, mouth and chin. Her hair was black, and fell in masses upon her white, half-exposed shoulders.

She wore a dress of green silk. Her feet were incased in satin slippers, and in her hair was entwined a string of pearls. Her other ornaments consisted of a long, thick-linked watch-chain, a pair of gold bracelets, and upon her long, tapering fingers she wore three rings, each of which was worth in itself a small fortune. But, as her father was wealthy, and she an only child, he could afford to be lavish in his presents to her. She was called Therese Hautville.

"And so, Therese," said Fred Lorraine, "you think that Montbars loves you, eh?"

"Think so?" exclaimed she, with a slight laugh. "No, I do not *think* so. I am *certain* that he does."

"He has told you so, then?"

"Never."

"Then don't be too sure, Therese, I beg of you," said he, pettishly. "Besides, what is Montbars but a miserable, dastardly pirate!"

"Sh—sh! Fred," said Therese, in a low tone. "I expect Montbars here this evening, and I would not have him hear you say aught against him for your sake—as well as mine," she concluded, giving him a sly look, which, by him, was unobserved. The news of Montbars's expected visit had caused him to turn pale, and to cast uneasy glances round the room.

The next moment a negro servant entered the room, and announced the arrival of "Captain Montbars."

A slight flush crossed the face of Therese, as she ordered the servant to admit the captain; and turning to Fred, she said:

"Come, Fred, have no fears. You shall see that I hold out to him not the slightest encouragement."

She had scarcely concluded the sentence, ere the door of the apartment again opened. Therese and Fred both glanced quickly toward it. Montbars stood upon the threshold!

For a second—and for a second only—the captain stood irresolute, as his eye fell upon Fred Lorraine. But he was too much the master of himself to evince much surprise, and with a firm, haughty air he entered the room.

Therese rose to meet him; and, after the customary greetings were exchanged, the sea-captain was introduced to Fred Lorraine, being previously unacquainted. Upon hearing the name of Lorraine, Montbars slightly started.

"What," he said to himself, "can this be the son of the Lorraine I knew? If he is, he certainly don't favor his father."

Montbars seated himself. All three endeavored to do the utmost toward making each other feel quite at their ease, but the attempt ended in a total failure. The conversation was, in spite of themselves, reserved and frigid. It was plainly evident to their host that Fred Lorraine felt that Montbars was intruding, and that Montbars would not have cared in the least if the young man was a hundred leagues away.

At last, seeing that the sea-captain was growing weary in the extreme, Lorraine arose.

"Well," he said, "it is growing late, and I must beg leave to bid you adieu. I hope, Captain Montbars," he added, with a low bow, and an extremely sinister expression, "we shall meet again. Adieu."

Half an hour more found Montbars in an exceedingly good humor, and seated in the same spot where we found young Lorraine when we introduced him to our readers.

"You are certain, then, that you care not the least for him, Therese?" asked Montbars, looking her steadily in the face.

"No," she answered, boldly. "He is an acquaintance, only. But let us change the subject. To-morrow night there is to be a *bal masque* in Port au Prince. Are you going to attend it, Jacques?"

"No, Therese. To-morrow night I have an appointment which I can not break."

On hearing this the countenance of the young girl fell.

"I am sorry, Jacques," she said. "That is the

only fault I have to find with you. You are not with me enough."

Montbars took her hands in his, and was about to reply, when a crash of thunder stayed him.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, instead. "We are to have a storm."

Releasing her hands, he rose to his feet, walked to the window, and gazed out. Therese followed his example. The wind was sweeping along with fearful violence, and the black clouds overhead were suffering the rain to fall in torrents.

A moment later, the sound of hoof-beats fell upon the ears of the two stationed at the window; and in another, two horses, with their riders, halted before the house.

"Can we shelter ourselves until the storm has passed over?" asked a manly voice.

"Yes," answered Therese, from within. "Enter quick! *Mon Dieu!* the worst part of the hurricane has yet to come."

Without another word, the one who had asked for shelter slid from his horse to the wet ground, and then assisted his companion—a young and beautiful girl—from hers.

Therese sprung to the door, and opened it wide enough to admit them. It was not long ere they entered, their garments drenched completely with the rain.

"Ha! Valma, it is you, eh?" exclaimed Therese, as her eyes lit upon the young girl who had just entered.

"Yes. I and my companion, here, were just returning from a long ride, when the storm overtook us. By the by, Therese, you are not acquainted with Mr. Lorraine. Let me introduce you. Mr. Lorraine—Mademoiselle Hautville."

Mr. Lorraine! On hearing the name Therese started.

"This," she said to herself, "must be Fred's cousin, of whom I have heard him once or twice make mention."

She examined the young man attentively. He was at least four years younger than Fred Lorraine, taller by some inches and much more finely built. His complexion was dark, and illuminated by a pair of large, fine blue eyes. His hair was of a dark chestnut color, and fell in ringlets over his ears and round his well-set, stout neck—the unfailing sign of a large stock of vitality. He stood straight as an arrow, which showed off to great advantage his well-expanded chest. His arms were long, and tough as young oaks.

"Yes," thought Therese Hautville, as she took in all this—"he is handsomer than Fred—handsomer by far."

Montbars, too, seated in the further end of the room, had heard the name, and he, too, had examined the young man attentively.

"Yes," he muttered, in a low tone. "That is the son of old Lorraine. The young man resembles his father greatly. There are the same arms, the same eyes and nose, the same appearance that once characterized his father. It is perhaps well that I cautioned Pierre. He will have, as I feared he would, no ordinary man to cope with."

Late that night, when all in the house, save herself, were wrapped in slumber, Therese

Hautville lay tossing upon her bed, unable to sleep. Some one in her thoughts prevented her. Was it Fred Lorraine? No. Was it Montbars? No.

CHAPTER III. THE PLOTTERS.

WHEN Montbars had quitted the residence of Mr. Hautville that night, the hour was eleven. The storm had ceased, the black clouds had rolled away, and the stars were shining brightly in the heavens. His steed had been sheltered in the stable. It was, however, now brought forth. The captain was quickly astride it, and galloped away toward Port au Prince.

"Strange," he said, half-aloud, as he galloped on; "I can not fathom her. This evening she appeared pleased enough at my coming, but toward the last she grew indifferent and even cold toward me."

The three miles that lay between Mr. Hautville's abode and Port au Prince soon dwindled down to a few rods. Here the sea-captain brought his steed to a standstill, and then gazed about him.

He next brought forth his time-piece, and, barely enabled to do so by the dim light the stars gave, made out the time.

"Good!" he exclaimed to himself. "It wants yet five minutes to the time."

The time-piece was returned to its place, and the captain sat silently waiting upon the back of the steed. He had not long to wait.

Before three minutes more had passed, a low, peculiar whistle notified Montbars that some one was approaching. However, the signal gave him no uneasiness. It was that of a friend.

A second later that friend stood beside him. A glance revealed him to be Pierre, The Savage.

"Well, Pierre," said the other, "punctual as ever. Is everything ready?"

"Everything. The rest are already assembled."

"All right. I'll not be absent much longer."

And so saying, the captain slid down from his saddle, handed Pierre the rein, and then walked quickly away.

Instead of walking directly to the city, Montbars followed a path that obliques sharply off in another direction. Half a mile or more passed over, and he stood in close proximity to what would have appeared to a stranger only a rock of huge proportions. The rock stood alone on a bare piece of ground, towering up some twenty-five or thirty feet, and the circumference of which must have been at least ninety feet.

Montbars continued his walk until he reached a point where the rock offered a place of ascent to its summit, should any person choose to avail himself of the chance, and climb up, and then he paused. The next thing he did was to give a low whistle.

"Who goes there?" sharply demanded a voice, coming from the top of the rock.

"A friend to the cause," was the answer given.

"Speak!" said the sentry again.

"Montbars," was the next answer.

Without further ado, Montbars commenced the ascent of the rock, an undertaking attended with considerable difficulty.

Arrived at the top, an immense hollow in the rock was to be seen—a hollow large enough to contain at least a dozen men.

Montbars glanced downward. He perceived that three men, one of them holding in his hand a wax candle, occupied the hollow; and he at once proceeded to lower himself down until he was seated beside them.

"Ha, captain!" was the greeting. "We were waiting for you."

The three men, as their garb and appearance attested, were seamen, like Montbars. Two of the men were medium-sized, dark-visaged Frenchmen. The third was a man of quite a different stamp. He was a short, burly-looking fellow, light-haired and complexioned—a Welshman, known by the name of Morgan, and was one of the most notorious of all the buccaneers who ever infested the Spanish main.

"Well," answered Montbars, "since you are waiting, we will proceed to business at once. The map! Did either of you bring it with you?"

"Yes, most gracious captain," replied one of the men. "Here it is," at the same time producing a greasy-looking roll of paper.

"Very well," replied Montbars. "But before I look at it, I would like to ask a few questions."

"Proceed. We will try and answer them."

"Well, then, Captain Morgan," asked Montbars, addressing himself to the Welshman, "how many men have you secured for the expedition? Remember, we want but those upon whom we can rely."

"That is perfectly understood," replied Morgan. "I can rally at any moment at least a thousand."

"And I five hundred," said one of the Frenchmen.

"And I five hundred," said the other.

"Two thousand," said Montbars.

Then, after thinking for a moment, he continued:

"The number is small, but I think by using stratagem, the place can be taken. Porto Bello is a city well fortified, and usually well garrisoned. The Spaniards think it invincible."

"Let them think so," said Morgan, with a coarse laugh. "They won't think so long, when they see my hounds let loose, I'll warrant."

"The map," said Montbars.

This was handed to him, and he at once proceeded to unroll it. His eyes wandered over it until they fell upon the situation of Porto Bello, a large, rich city on the Isthmus of Panama.

He examined the map a long time—examined it until the question he had been trying to see through became quite clear to him. Then he rolled the map up, and returned it to its owner.

In as few words as possible, Montbars imparted to his companions the plans he had formed. All knew that Montbars was a man of both courage and sagacity; and his words were therefore received with hearty approval.

"Well," asked Morgan, as the captain concluded, "when, think you, had the expedition better start out?"

"To-day is the fifteenth of July. Certainly, by the first of October, all will be in readiness."

"The first of October, then, let it be," said Morgan.

After a few more minor arrangements had been made, the four arose to depart.

The grand buccaneer raid against the City of Porto Bello was to commence on the first of October. Porto Bello at that time was the chief Atlantic mart for slaves and gold, silver and diamonds, and the buccaneer captains knew, were they destined to be victorious, that the enterprise would give each of them a colossal fortune, after even distributing a fair amount among their followers.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAL MASQUE.

THE night following, as Therese Hautville had informed Montbars, there was to be held in Port au Prince, a *bal masque*—held in honor of the new governor of the island.

By nine o'clock the guests had begun to slowly arrive, and by half-past ten the room was filled with all the beauty and *elite* of the city.

Therese Hautville, leaning on the arm of Fred Lorraine, had just entered, and immediately upon doing so, her eyes commenced to scan the room, as if in search of some one. That one was the cousin of him at her side—Henry Lorraine. She was not disappointed, for he was there, leaning upon the arm of her friend, Valma Woodville. Neither, like herself and Fred, were *en masque*. She had no sooner perceived this than she requested Fred to find her a seat. There was something about her manner which showed her to be agitated—so much so, indeed, that her companion noticed it. But, attributing it to her anticipations of the dancing which was to follow, he said nothing.

At that time the floor was occupied entirely by those *en masque*, and those who did not wear masques would have to wait for their turn to take the floor.

The time flew by until the clock in a neighboring church belfry gave out the hour of midnight; then, one by one, the masques began to drop, the non-masquers claimed a portion of the floor, and orders were given them to form for a quadrille.

Obedient to the order, Henry Lorraine and Valma Woodville took their places in the center of the hall. The moment they took the floor, a murmur of admiration went round the room, for by far they were the handsomest couple there. She, with her long, wavy light hair, deep-blue eyes, and handsome figure, was known to them all—known as the most beautiful girl in Port au Prince.

Not so her partner. With but three exceptions—Valma Woodville, Therese Hautville and Fred Lorraine—the young man's name was unknown to them all.

He had scarcely taken the floor when the eye of Fred fell upon him, causing him to start with surprise.

"What!" he said, in a voice loud enough to be overheard by Therese. "Henry here! This is an unexpected surprise!"

"To whom do you refer?" she asked. "To Mr. Lorraine, your cousin?"

"What know you of my cousin, Therese?" he demanded, sharply.

"Not as much as I wish to know," she answered.

He made no reply, but, rising to his feet, walked away until he reached the door. This was opened for him, and he passed outside.

The quadrille was ended, and those who had been participating in it regained their seats.

"Mademoiselle Woodville," whispered Henry Lorraine to his partner, "will you walk into the garden? I wish to speak to you in private."

With a smile she took his arm, and he led her from the room into a garden adjoining the building. Here a seat was found, and the two availed themselves of it.

"Mademoiselle Woodville," said Henry, "I presume you are acquainted with my cousin, Fred Lorraine?"

"Yes," she answered. "I noticed him in the room to-night."

"So did I, and I am half-sorry that it was so. Fred Lorraine and I are heart-foes to each other."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I will explain why. When my cousin was a young boy both his parents died. My father received the boy into his house, and together we grew up. If Fred had been my brother, he could not have received better treatment than what he did."

"When I was in my fifteenth year, my father became possessed of a desire to visit the New World, which desire he carried out. He found his way to Hispaniola, here, and in a few years, by dint of the energy and perseverance which always characterized him, he accumulated a very large fortune."

"One day, soon after passing my twenty-first year, a letter came to me from my father, informing me that his earthly career was near to its close. He informed me, too, that, owing to the lawless state in which the island existed, he had buried the whole amount of his wealth in the earth, and gave me the necessary directions for finding it."

"When I had carefully read the letter, I handed it to Fred, who was near my side. He took it, read it through, and then handed it back without a word. Not suspecting any foul-play, I placed the letter carelessly in a secretary that stood in my sleeping-room."

"Late that night, I was aroused by a slight noise. I sprang up. I had left a light burning, and there I saw, standing by the secretary, my father's letter in his hand, my cousin Fred."

"I quickly approached him, and demanded the letter. He refused, and I sprang upon him! In the struggle, the letter was torn in two, he retaining one part, I the other. He made his escape from the room, and to-night is the first time since that that we have seen each other. Fred is playing a bold game."

For a few moments after he had finished, both were silent.

At last he said:

"Mademoiselle Woodville, if it were within your power to help me secure that piece of paper, would you do so?"

"Would I?" she said, with a warmth that sent a thrill of joy to the young man's heart. "I would do anything for you."

"Listen, then," said he, lowering his voice, and edging nearer to her, "there is but one way—"

He was interrupted by the sound occasioned by some one at the other end of the garden. The noise was quickly followed by another similar one, and then another, and then another.

"What can it mean?" exclaimed Valma, clutching her companion's arm.

Without a word he rose to his feet, and looked in the direction from whence the sounds proceeded. The moon was at her full, and shining, unobscured, in the heavens. It helped him to comprehend all at a glance. He saw but a few rods away from him the forms of men, rough and savage in their exterior, and making toward him as softly as panthers.

For a moment the young man stood irresolute; then, perceiving the men were rapidly nearing him, he seized the young girl round the waist, and hurriedly said:

"Come; I am in danger. Let us return."

On hearing this, Valma gave vent to a half-suppressed cry; but, nevertheless, she was on her feet in an instant.

But it was of no avail. The men, perceiving themselves to be discovered, dashed forward at full speed. Henry had only time to draw from his bosom a piece of paper, thrust it into his frightened companion's hands, and bid her keep it safe for him, when a rough hand grasped him by the shoulder. A blow from the young man's fist laid the ruffian at his feet.

"Surrender!" cried a voice, which he recognized as belonging to his cousin.

"Never!" was the reply.

"Then, my men, down with him," shouted the miscreant.

"Hold him tight, while I search him," was the next command of that worthy, Fred.

On hearing this, Henry attempted to struggle for his freedom, but he was powerless.

Fred thrust his hands into one of his cousin's pockets, and brought forth what it contained. After viewing these for a moment, he cast them away. This was repeated until the contents of every pocket was brought to light. That for which the villain sought was not to be found.

"Drag him to the ship!" he said, in a voice hoarse with passion. "Drag him to the ship! Perhaps he'll tell me when we're alone."

CHAPTER V.

TAKEN BY SPANIARDS.

BOUND hand and foot, Henry Lorraine was hoisted clear of the ground, and carried along in that position.

Fully a mile was passed over ere his captors halted. When they did so, they set down their burden upon the Port au Prince quay.

"Where's the boat?" demanded Fred Lorraine.

"Not in sight, sir, as far as I sees," answered one of the men.

"Where the deuce can they have gone to?" yelled the villain, at the same time giving utterance to a fierce oath. "I thought I gave

them strict orders to remain here until I returned?"

"You did, sir, you did," chimed in three or four of the men.

At that moment, before Fred had time to speak, a score of well-armed men appeared suddenly in their rear, and a firm voice called out in French!

"Do not stir, or you are dead men!"

"Heaven shield us!" ejaculated Fred. "Spaniards!"

Presently one of the Spaniards—for such they were—detached himself from the rest, and approached the party he had commanded to halt.

"Are you Spaniards?" asked the officer, in French.

"No," replied Fred, in the same tongue, for he spoke the language fluently.

"Then," continued the Spanish officer, "I arrest you in the name of his Majesty, the King of Spain."

Neither Fred nor his comrades dare ask the reason. Not one of them but too well knew that all within the limits of Hispaniola, were deemed by the King of Spain to be outlaws and desperadoes, fit only to grace the gallows.

"Which of you is the leader?" demanded the officer.

"I am!" boldly answered Fred.

"Are you acquainted, then, with a reprobate bearing the name of Montbars?" was the next question put by the officer.

"Yes."

"Do you know where he is to be found at this moment?"

Instead of answering, Fred stepped boldly up to the Spaniard, and drew him a few steps to one side. Here the two remained in conversation for some time. In all probability they would have remained so longer, had not they been interrupted by the loud hiss of a rocket, as it ascended toward the heavens.

"See!" exclaimed Fred, as he saw the rocket ascend. "You have been discovered. Yonder is the signal."

Again a loud hiss was heard, and another rocket was seen to shoot upward, quickly followed by another and another.

"Remember your word," said the officer to Fred, as he ordered his followers to secure their prisoners with all possible haste.

"Trust me," said the villain. Then, first bowing low to the Spaniard, he walked quickly away.

The Spaniards were not long in securing their prisoners.

"Who is this? A Spaniard?" demanded the officer, when, for the first time, his eyes fell upon Henry Lorraine.

"No," answered the young man, "I am not a Spaniard. I am an Englishman."

"Then," said the officer, "bring him along. The English are as big a set of pirates as the French. Look at their cursed Morgan. Solonnois himself could not begin to compete with him."

"But," remonstrated Henry, "I am no pirate; nor have I ever been."

"We'll talk about that when we get to Spain. Bring him along."

To his great relief, the thongs that bound the

young man's limbs were severed, and he was allowed to walk between two sailors.

The party was not long in reaching the spot where a boat was waiting for them. It did not take many moments to embark, and then the boat was pushed off from the shore.

By this time the news that a Spanish man-of-war had anchored in the harbor, had begun to spread through the town like wild-fire. Lights were seen flashing along the streets, and men running to and fro in consternation. What ships there were in the harbor, sent forth a volley to proclaim that they, too, had discovered the enemy.

A row of half a mile, and the Spanish vessel was reached. A rope-ladder was lowered down, and, followed by their captors, the prisoners hoisted themselves upon deck.

The officer in command of the party proved to be the captain of the vessel.

"Are all aboard?" he demanded of his first lieutenant, who met him as he gained the deck.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Then pass the word to weigh. We must get out of here as quick as possible. Bless the Virgin! but we've made a good haul to-night. Do not fail to see that these are attended to," pointing toward the prisoners. So saying, he retired to his cabin, to celebrate the events of the night by indulging in a bottle of wine.

As for Henry Lorraine and his fellow-prisoners, they were heavily ironed, and then thrust into the ship's hold. Arrived there, an unexpected view met their gaze. Hitherto they had supposed that they were the only prisoners; but in this they were mistaken. By the aid of the light given out by the lantern, Henry saw, lying in various postures on the bottom of the hold, at least fifty men, all heavily ironed, and mostly sailors. But not all were of this class. To his still further surprise, the young man saw that a few were men whom he had several times seen in Port au Prince—seen in the capacity of merchants and traders. But the Spaniards made no distinction between them. Sailor and merchant were both held in the light of freebooters, and both had therefore been served alike.

Faint and weary, Henry Lorraine threw himself down on the hard planks, and, overpowered with sleep, in spite of his pain and anxiety, it was not long before he slept.

When he awoke, it was morning.

The lanterns had been extinguished by those keeping guard over the prisoners, and the light was streaming into the hold through a trap-door. The young man knew by the motion of the vessel that she must be far out at sea, and sailing before a brisk wind.

About two hours after waking, Henry's breakfast, as well as the rest of the prisoners', was brought, and consisted of a cup of good coffee, and a small allowance of hard and stale bread.

The morning passed, and it wore toward the middle of the afternoon, when a cry from the deck attracted the attention of those in the hold, causing one and all to wonder what it meant. Listening intently, Henry could hear that some excitement was in progress. The sailors were hurrying up and down the deck, and the voices of the officers could be heard shouting out order after order in rapid succession.

At length the excitement somewhat decreased, and the first lieutenant and half a dozen sailors, well armed, entered the hold. Henry Lorraine's heart sunk within him. Heavens! Were the prisoners to be butchered on the spot?

No. The lieutenant seized one by the arm, then another, then another, and commanded them to step upon deck. His eye then lit upon Henry, and then the young man was ordered to follow them. This he did, as well and as quickly as the heavy weight which was attached to him would allow.

But he felt well repaid for his toil when he gained the deck, the fresh sea-air reviving his flagging spirits wonderfully.

He cast his eye out on the ocean. Not more than half a mile away was a ship, with long, raking masts, and flying at her peak was a black flag. It was a pirate.

Standing near the young man was a small group of sailors, and he felt certain that he had heard one of them pronounce the name of Montbars. That, he knew, was the name of the tall, handsome man he had met at the house of M. Hautville, a night or two previous, as our readers will recollect.

Nearer and nearer the pirate ship approached, until she was within speaking-distance, but still neither vessel seemed to want to commence hostilities.

The Spanish commander stood upon deck, his speaking-trumpet in his hand. This he raised to his lips.

"Who are you?" he shouted over the waves.

"The ship Achilles. Captain, Jacques Montbars," was the answer.

Henry Lorraine noticed that the pirate ship carried several guns, and her decks were crowded with men. He knew that, in case of an encounter, she would prove, perhaps, more than a match for the man-of-war. This its captain well knew. The next thing on the programme was a shot from one of the pirate's guns, which, however, whistled harmlessly by.

"Stop!" shouted the Spaniard, through his trumpet, as the report of the shot died away. "I have a number of your comrades aboard"—pointing toward the prisoners. "Fire another shot, and I'll have no mercy upon them. They shall be hung at the yard-arm one after another."

"Hang away!" cried out one of the buccaneers. "You might as well do it now as when you get them to Spain."

This was quickly followed by a broadside of grape-shot, which inflicted serious injury upon the Spaniard, who was not long in returning the compliment.

To his horror, Henry Lorraine perceived that the Spanish captain was preparing to put into execution his threat, if he was again fired upon. One end of a long, thin rope was thrown across the yard-arm, and, at a signal from the captain, the other end was fastened round one of the unfortunate prisoners' necks. Another signal, and the man was seen struggling in the air.

As Henry had anticipated, the Spaniard was continually receiving the greatest damage, but still the horrid execution was kept up. Five of the prisoners had thus suffered. The next one on the list was Henry Lorraine.

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With the quickness of lightning, he slipped the irons from his wrists, and threw them upon a deck. One of the sailors only had presence of mind enough to intercept him; but he received a blow which sent him reeling to the deck. In another minute the young man leaped headlong into the ocean. When he rose to the surface, he was several rods from the man-of-war, and he struck out boldly for the other vessel. This act had been perceived by the buccaneers, who gave vent to a loud shout of applause and encouragement.

CHAPTER VI.

AMONG THE BUCCANEERS.

HENRY LORRAINE was a fine swimmer, and he was not long in reaching the point for which he had struck out. A rope was thrown to him, which was quickly grasped, and the young man hauled on deck, amid the shouts and yells of the whole buccaneer crew.

"Ha! Mr. Lorraine, allow me to congratulate you on your escape. Truly, you acted bravely," said a man, stepping up to Henry.

That man was Montbars.

"What!" thought he to himself. "Can it be possible that Mademoiselle Hautville is to be the bride of a pirate?"

But he said nothing, and received the congratulations offered him with a low bow.

"Come," continued Montbars; "you look sick. Step down with me into the cabin. A glass of wine will soon revive you again."

Nothing loth, the young man followed the buccaneer captain into his cabin. Here were produced a decanter of wine and a couple of glasses. Henry poured one of the glasses full, and drank it down at a gulp.

He had scarcely swallowed it, when its reviving effects made him himself once more.

"Captain Montbars," he said, "cannot any thing be done to put an end to the cruelties now going on aboard that ship?"

"Ay," said the buccaneer, "something can be done; but not until every cursed Spaniard aboard that vessel lies weltering in his blood. But tell me, how came your men there?"

In as few words as possible, Henry Lorraine related what had occurred the night previous—how the Spaniard had made bold enough to enter Port au Prince, and ransack its streets in search of prisoners.

On learning this, the blood of Montbars boiled.

"Curse them!" he exclaimed. "And how many did the devils capture?"

"A great many," replied Henry.

"And the Spaniard threatened to hang them all, unless we left off firing at him?"

"His very words."

"Then, Mr. Lorraine, we'll stop at once. My plan is this. A few leagues from here lies a small island, where the Spaniard will be compelled to stop, and take in a supply of water. As soon as the vessel is out of sight, we can follow in her wake, and board her under the cover of night."

So saying, he turned on his heel, and sprung on deck. The young man followed close at his heels.

During the time they had been in the cabin, the battered appearance of both ships showed that the sailors on deck had not been idle. Both ships had suffered fearfully, especially the Spaniard. One of her masts had been shot clean away, and her decks presented a fearful scene. The hanging of the prisoners was being carried on no longer. It needed every man of them, now, to keep the guns at work.

"Ha!" exclaimed Montbars, as his eye took in the situation, "my men have made better work of it than I expected they would. I have changed my mind," he continued, addressing Henry. "That ship will sink in less than an hour. I have decided upon boarding her at once."

At that moment one of the sailors stepped up to Montbars, and said, in French:

"Captain, there's a sail about two miles astern, and she appears to be a customer like the one we're just engaged with."

The buccaneer snatched up a glass, leveled it with his eye and gazed through it for a few seconds.

"Yes," he said, laying the instrument aside, "it's another cursed Spaniard."

With a loud exclamation, he caused every man's attention to be at once centered upon him. Then he ordered them to quit the guns, and to spread every inch of sail possible, fore and aft. The orders were quickly obeyed, and the vessel bounded over the waves like an arrow. She was a magnificent sailer, and before long, the masts of the two Spanish men-of-war were no longer visible.

Then the course of the vessel was altered, and, under less pressure of canvas, she headed due south.

A short time before the hour of sunset, a blue line became visible against the horizon. This, Montbars informed the young man, was the island of St. Catharine, the usual stopping-place of Spanish cruisers, on their return.

"It is my intention," the buccaneer continued, "to send a party of men ashore, with instructions to board the Spaniard, if she arrives here to-night. Of course I speak of the one we escaped from. It is more than probable that she will relieve the one we were engaged with, and set out at once for Spain."

Sometime after sundown, the vessel arrived opposite the island, a beautiful spot, covered from end to end with magnificent trees, alone peculiar to a tropical clime.

The ship was hove-to, and a boat, containing a dozen seamen, all picked men, was lowered and soon pulled away toward the island.

Then the sails of the buccaneer ship were once more spread, and she stood boldly out to sea.

Knowing perfectly well what were the intentions of Montbars, the young man was soon engaged in doing ample justice to an excellent supper, after which he retired, weary enough, to a hammock which had been allotted him.

The first flash of the sun saw him again on deck. About a league away to the south was the island he had seen the night before, and not a mile from the shore was a ship. The young man glanced at the flag flying at the peak. It was black—the ensign of the buccaneer! The vessel that Montbars had expected had arrived,

then, and his men had succeeded in capturing her.

The buccaneer vessel was not long in arriving within speaking distance. Those aboard her saw upon the deck of the Spanish ship, not the dark, swarthy-faced Spaniard, but men of their own stamp.

"Succeeded, eh?" cried out Montbars, who was upon deck.

The reply was in the affirmative.

"Where is the crew?"

Those to whom the question was directed pointed toward the island.

"They came ashore last night for water," said one of the buccaneers, "and we seized their boat, destroyed it, and then boarded their vessel."

"And the officers?" demanded Montbars.

"In the hold."

"Very well. Bring them on deck, and then aboard here. After that, bring yourselves, and see that their cursed hulk is well scuttled."

So saying the buccaneer chieftain turned upon his heel, and descended into his cabin.

The orders he had issued were soon being obeyed. A number of men, clothed in rich uniforms, and which contrasted strangely with the odd-looking, dirty suits of their captors, the buccaneers, were suddenly seen upon the deck of the vessel which, twenty-four hours before, had been their own. They were hurried aboard a boat, and then rowed toward the pirate vessel.

When the rest from aboard the Spanish vessel had arrived and the vessel had been scuttled, Montbars was informed that his orders were executed. On learning this he immediately returned to the deck.

His captives, outwardly calm and collected, but inwardly trembling for their lives, were before him, guarded and heavily ironed.

"Which of you," he demanded of the Spaniards, "was the captain of the vessel that we sunk yesterday?"

"I am," replied one of the officers, a small-sized, cruel-looking man, of not more than thirty-eight years of age. The other Spaniard, who wore the uniform of a captain, was an intelligent-looking man, of nearly eighty years of age, with hair and beard as white as snow.

"Very well," said Montbars, "you and I will settle scores hereafter."

Then, at a signal from their chief, a number of the buccaneers dragged the Spaniard to some distance from the others, there to await the disposal of his captors.

"You," said Montbars, turning to the remaining Spaniards, "deserve an easier death than he, and you shall have it. Old man," he continued, addressing the white-haired captain, "I respect old age, even in an enemy. Therefore, I will give you a chance for your life. Of course, being an old sailor, you can swim?"

"I can, senor," replied the old man.

"Very well. Yonder island is not further off than half a mile. If you can swim to it, you can have your freedom. Furthermore, I will extend the same proposition to you all. Jenkins," addressing one of the crew, "jerk off their irons."

The Spaniards knew that it would be useless

to refuse the offer. They knew well that the "offer" was in reality a command. Accordingly, as soon as their limbs were freed from the irons, they prepared without a murmur to meet their doom.

"Captain Montbars," said Henry Lorraine, at this moment stepping up to the chief, "you said, a few moments ago, that you respected gray hairs. Did you mean it?"

"Why?" demanded the pirate, confronting the young man.

"That is no reply to my question," returned Lorraine, with an energy that caused the other to start with astonishment.

"What right have you to demand an answer from me?" he asked.

"I have no right to demand an answer, Captain Montbars," said Henry. "I ask you to save his life. He is old, and cannot harm you much, even should he succeed in reaching Spain again. Think, Captain Montbars," continued the young man, lowering his voice to almost a whisper, "of Mademoiselle Hautville. Would she, think you, consent to the old man's death?"

At the mention of that name, Montbars started.

"No," he said, seizing the young man's hand, "she would not. His life shall be spared. Perhaps he, too, has a daughter at home, who is longing for his return."

He turned toward the captives. Their chains had been removed, and they stood silently awaiting what was to be done with them next.

"Put that old man in a boat," said Montbars, "and row him ashore. The others are able to swim."

"You forget, captain," said one of the men. "The whole of the old fellow's crew are ashore, and it'll go bad with us if we land there."

"True; I had forgotten that. Well, then, put him in the boat, and set him adrift. He won't be long in reaching the shore."

The old Spaniard was seized upon by several of the buccaneers, and forced into a boat which had once belonged to the vessel of which he was the commander. This was then lowered to the water, and cut loose.

This was no sooner done, than one of the Spaniards, watching his opportunity, leaped with all his might into the ocean, thinking, no doubt, that he could reach the boat in which the captain had been placed before the sharks grabbed him. Poor fellow! He miscalculated sadly.

The Spaniard was a fine swimmer, and made good progress. But a couple of rods now lay between him and the boat. Up to this moment, the sharks, whose dreadful fins were to be seen in every direction, had failed to perceive him. They did now, however; and a dozen started after the fugitive with the speed of an arrow.

For some time the race appeared to be an equal one, and it was hard to tell which would be the winner; but at length it was plainly demonstrated that the Spaniard must reach the boat first. He did so, and drew himself into it with the rapidity of thought.

But if he was destined to escape the savages of the deep, he was not thus to escape the savages who trod the deck of the vessel from which he had but leaped a few moments before. One of

the crew leveled his long horse-pistol at the fugitive's head, and pressed the trigger.

It pierced the fugitive somewhere in the neck, causing him to roll in a heap on the bottom of the boat.

In a few moments, all of the prisoners, but one, were to be seen struggling in the water.

But this was of short duration. Scarce three minutes had passed, when not a vestige of them was to be seen. A few bubbles only marked the spot where they had disappeared.

Montbars pointed to the Spanish captain, who was still upon deck, but heavily ironed:

"Take him into the hold," he said. "I will make an example of him when we arrive at Port au Prince."

By this time, the vessel which the buccaneers had scuttled was nearly ready to sink. Another ten minutes would cause her to entirely disappear. The sails of the Achilles were once more spread, and her bow turned toward the northwest. If the wind continued good, Montbars informed Henry, twenty-four hours would see them inside the harbor of San Jose, on the western coast of the island of Tortuga, the stronghold of the buccaneers.

CHAPTER VII.

JONGSHAY.

WE must now return to Fred Lorraine, whom we left on the night that the Spaniards had made bold enough to enter Port au Prince.

The villain had no sooner quitted the quay, where he had left the Spaniards, than he returned to the ball-room, to see whether or not she whom he had escorted there was still in the room. No, she was not. Feeling hurt at her suitor's unaccounted-for behavior, Mademoiselle Hautville had gone to her home. Valma Woodville, too, was not to be seen.

"It is strange," Fred soliloquized, as he, too, quitted the ball-room, "what Henry could have done with that piece of paper. I am certain he had it with him, for, when my eye fell upon him to-night, he involuntarily put his hand up to his bosom, as if to make sure that the paper was safe. Yes, I am certain that he has it with him, but why was it that I didn't succeed in finding it?"

The villain continued to soliloquize thus until he arrived at the inn where the interview between Montbars and Pierre The Savage had taken place, a few nights previously.

Although the hour was very late, the innkeeper was still astir, and in readiness for any customer who might chance to arrive.

"Is Pierre within?" demanded Fred of the man.

"Yes, he is asleep."

"I must see him."

"He gave me strict orders not to let any one disturb him."

"What care I for his orders?" exclaimed Fred with an oath. "Show me to his apartment at once." Fearful of the consequences, should he disobey him, the innkeeper led the young man to the rear of the building, pointed out a certain door to him, and then made a hasty retreat.

Fred knocked loudly upon the door.

"Who's there?" said a voice within the room.

"Your friend," replied Fred.

"Curse all friends, who come here at this time of the night," said the voice, which, Fred knew, was that of Pierre. "What do you want?"

"I must see you, if only for a moment."

With another curse at being thus troubled, Pierre arose and in a few moments opened the door. His next movement was to light a small lamp.

"Pierre," said Fred, as he stepped into the room, "I want that piece of paper that I gave you to take care of."

"Hal!" exclaimed Pierre. "Then you have got the other half?"

"No," replied Fred, "I have not. Besides, what if I had? What difference would it make to you?"

The face of Pierre grew savage in its expression, but he answered in a calm tone:

"Half of the treasure, I believe, belongs to me, if it is found?"

"We will talk about that afterward," quickly replied Fred. "What I want now is that piece of paper, and not words."

"And supposing I refuse to give it up?"

"Refuse! You dare not refuse."

The Frenchman scornfully smiled.

"I will show you," he said.

Opening the door as wide as possible, he next seized Fred Lorraine by the shoulders, and, with a mighty jerk, landed the young man in the passageway. He then quickly shut the door, and securely fastened it, for he knew that Fred was far stronger than he, and if he gained the inside again, it would go hard with him. But his precautions were useless. Feeling exceedingly crestfallen at being thus outwitted, Fred rose to his feet, and once more sought the presence of the innkeeper, whom he found sipping a glass of hot water and brandy.

"Have you a horse to spare to-night?" Fred inquired.

The obliging Englishman replied in the affirmative.

"Have him saddled at once, then."

The innkeeper laid aside his glass, called up his hostler, who had long gone to sleep, and ordered a horse to be got ready immediately.

This was no sooner done than Fred mounted, and set off at a gallop.

The road he took led, not toward the sea-coast, but into the interior of the country. He had not proceeded more than five miles when he came to a sudden halt.

The moon was now near the horizon, but, being well acquainted with the surroundings, Fred was enabled to make out the fact that he had arrived at the point for which he had set out.

He now wheeled his steed sharply to the right, and entered a clump of brushwood, tall and thick enough to have effectually concealed half a dozen horses and their riders, had they been there.

Fred slid from his saddle to the ground, and then securely fastened the animal he had bestrode to a small sapling.

Then he turned half-round, and walked several rods into the forest.

Here he again came to a halt.

"Jongshay! Jongshay!" he called out, in a loud tone,

After waiting for several moments, and hearing no reply to his call, he muttered:

"I wonder if the old fellow is away? Perhaps this whistle will arouse him."

He pulled forth a small metal whistle from his pocket, and applied it to his lips. A loud peal echoed through the woods.

This time Fred had not long to wait before his signal was answered. Scarce a moment had passed ere a loud exclamation reached his ears, causing him to replace the whistle in his pocket and hurry forward.

A dozen rods more brought him to a small, dilapidated hut, which looked as if it had withstood the storms of a century. Standing before it was the tall, gaunt form of a negro, who, as Fred approached, said in French:

"Who's that?"

"It is I, Jongshay," replied Fred, in the same tongue.

"Waugh! Lorraine?"

"Yes. I wish to see you about a certain matter."

With a grunt of approval, the negro led the way into the hut. Taking a lamp, formed from the half-shell of a large cocoanut, and half filled with some oil of his own manufacture, Jongshay soon lit the wick.

The light revealed to the eyes of Fred Lorraine a singular scene. The floor of the hut was covered with long, dry rushes, which crackled at every step. At the further corner were several shelves, filled with the skulls and skeletons of various animals, as well as of reptiles.

In another place were hanging several bunches of different kinds of herbs, which the negro was wont to use in his practice among his countrymen.

The room contained, besides, a couple of rude stools, a table, and a few articles of crockery. Bed, there was none. The owner of the hut, enveloped in his skin-robe, slept upon the rush-covered floor.

The negro himself was a tall, stoutly-built man, of perhaps sixty years of age, whose hair was fast losing its original color. His apparel consisted of a pair of flannel breeches, a coat which had once been the property of some Spanish grandee, but now old and exceedingly dirty, and a long robe of monkey-skins, which was thrown in a peculiar fashion across his shoulders.

Such was Jongshay, the much-respected, but much more feared, negro medicine-man, who was believed by the negroes of the island to possess the power of Obeah—the god whom they held sacred.

When the negro had lit the lamp, he placed it upon the table, seated himself, and motioned Fred to imitate his example.

"Jongshay," began Fred, "do you know Pierre the Savage?"

The negro replied in the affirmative.

"Very well," continued the villain, his countenance brightening; "it is of him that I wish to speak. Some time ago, I trusted the wretch with a letter belonging to me, fearing that I might lose it. To-night I asked him for it, and he refused to give it up."

Jongshay grunted, in order to inform Fred that he was understood.

"Well," continued the latter, "I want your assistance in the matter. See; if you can obtain that piece of paper, and deliver it safe to me, these belong to you."

So saying, Fred Lorraine pulled out half a dozen doubloons from his pocket, and spread them out in the palm of his hand. The sight of the money caused the negro to chuckle with delight. Avarice was not the least of his propensities.

"Well," said Fred, "what do you say?"

"Waugh!" said the other; "Pierre is a devil to play tricks with, but I will try. I have overcome fiercer men than him."

"I can depend upon you, then?"

"You can. Come here one week from to-night, and I promise that you shall have the paper."

Fred Lorraine then gave the negro a complete description of the paper, so that Jongshay would be able to recognize it, and then at once took his departure.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BUCCANEER'S LAIR.

AS Montbars had said, the Achilles, the day after leaving the island of St. Catherine, entered the harbor of San Jose. Immediately the buccaneers made preparations for going ashore, for their last cruise had been a successful one, and each had his pockets well-lined with Spanish gold.

The harbor of San Jose was filled with buccaneer vessels of every size and description. Some important object had evidently brought them there.

Even when a child, Henry Lorraine had learned of these desperate robbers, and more than once had expressed a desire to see them in their haunts. Here was a chance, and he was not the one to refuse to make the best of it.

The vessel's boats were quickly manned, and rowed toward the shore. Of course, the young man was one of the number.

The shore was reached, the boats dragged high upon the beach, and then the buccaneers commenced to climb up the rugged rocks, in order to reach the level ground beyond.

This was no sooner done, than Montbars, beckoning Henry to follow him, led the way into a narrow passage, formed by a cleft in an immense rock. Every step they took, it grew darker and darker, until the passage came to an end. Another step, and the two emerged into a spacious, dome-shaped cavern.

It was a beautiful, dazzling sight. On the floor of the cavern lay a carpet which was fit for the palace of a king. Furniture, magnificently carved, and composed of the most costly materials, paintings which had originally cost more than one fortune, were there.

Piles of rich silks, heaps after heaps of rich velvet were to be seen in every direction. Removing a flag from the floor, Montbars drew forth several bags, each filled with bright, shining gold pieces.

"These," said the sharper, pointing to the bags of gold, "will be my wedding-gift to Therese."

"Ha!" said Henry. "Then you and Mademoiselle Hautville are engaged?"

"We are. You will, perhaps, Monsieur Lorraine, think it strange that, innocent as she is, she has consented to become the bride of one like me."

An hour later found Henry Lorraine again outside the cavern.

With his mind dwelling upon the vast wealth he had just beheld, Henry wandered toward the ledge of rocks which overhung the sea, and stood silently contemplating the scene before him. But a few miles off he could plainly see Hispaniola, and this caused him to think of Valma Woodville.

His meditations were disturbed by the sound of voices.

"What!" said one. "Do you mean to insinuate that I did not play fair?"

"I do," said another voice. "Most decidedly."

Young Lorraine turned toward the speakers. The first speaker was a rather tall, well-made Frenchman, the latter a short, stoutly-built Dutchman. Both spoke in the French tongue.

"Then I say to you," said the former speaker, "that you are a liar—and a cursed one at that! Take that!"

And with these words, the excited Frenchman gave the Hollander a fierce blow with his clinched fist.

The latter quickly recovered himself, and, with the usual pluck of his countrymen, turned to resent the insult. One terrific blow from his sledge-hammer-like fist laid the Frenchman at his feet.

By this time quite a crowd of buccaneers had assembled, who, in loud tones, demanded the cause of the quarrel. It appeared that the two antagonists had been engaged in a game of chance, when the Dutchman detected his partner not playing exactly in accordance with the laws of the game. The upshot was the scene above described.

CHAPTER IX.

AGAIN OUTWITTED.

ON the morning following the night of the *bal masque*, Valma Woodville was seated in her chamber. Before her lay the piece of torn paper which Henry Lorraine had thrust into her hands when he had been torn from her side.

Again she read the paper, and read, for at least the twelfth time, what the paper contained, which was as follows:

"PORT
"DEAR
"Before
destination, I shall
fast. Even as I write
veins.

"It
England, and during
amassing a large
silver to the value
pounds sterling.
save yourself can
miles from Port au Prince
Cavern.' Just as the sun rises,
mouth due east, then advance
feet due north, and you will
or more come upon a small
the stone lies the treasure."

The young girl had hardly concluded this

strange collection of words, when a servant entered the chamber, and announced:

"A person named Lorraine is below, and wishes to speak to you, mademoiselle."

"What!" exclaimed Valma. "It must be Henry. Thank God!"

"Bid him be seated," she continued, addressing the servant. "I will be down in a moment."

Then, placing the piece of paper carefully in a drawer, she began to make a few hasty preparations in her toilet, before she presented herself to whom she supposed to be Henry Lorraine.

In the mean time, the servant, a not over-bright mulatto girl, delivered her young mistress's message to be in the parlor, who was none other than Fred.

"Very good!" said he. "Well, my girl, did you notice what your mistress was doing, when you went into the room?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Well, what was she doing?"

"Reading, monsieur."

"Ha! A letter?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Good! You are a smart girl. Take this."

The worthy threw the delighted servant a small piece of money.

"Now, then," he continued, "can you describe that piece of paper?"

The girl described it at once, for she had noticed minutely the piece of crumpled paper her mistress had held in her hand.

Fred's eyes sparkled with joy.

"That will do for now," he said, motioning the girl to leave the room. "I may want you again, and if I do, I will pay you well for your trouble."

A moment later, the door of the apartment was again opened, and Valma Woodville entered, her face wearing a smile of expected pleasure. But she no sooner caught sight of Fred Lorraine, than the smile instantly gave way to a frown of anger and disappointment.

"Well, sir," said Valma, in a severe tone, after the customary greetings had been exchanged, "what is your business with me?"

"That I can soon explain," said her visitor. "I wish you to show me the piece of paper my cousin, Henry Lorraine, gave you to preserve for him."

The young girl started; but, nevertheless, she answered, in a firm tone:

"Really, sir, you surprise me! How know you that your cousin confided thus in me?"

"He told me so."

Black as the lie was, it was uttered without a blush. The villain was too much of an adept for that.

Valma believed him. She turned pale—very, very pale. She knew that Fred Lorraine must have learned from Henry his secret by means of torture—and she shuddered to think what must have been the extent to which it had been carried, ere her lover would breathe it.

"Sir," she said, in a tone which contrasted strangely with her agitated manner, "I cannot comply with your request. That piece of paper I shall deliver only to him who placed it in my care. I shall guard it until then, as if my very life depended upon it."

"But, Miss Woodville, the paper is *mine*, not my cousin's."

"Your words are useless," she said. "I happen, sir, to know the history of that piece of paper."

Her words hit their intended mark. The villain, for the present, was foiled. But the interview had not been without its fruits. He now knew, what before he had only supposed, that the piece of paper upon which he set so much value, was in the possession of Valma Woodville.

Accordingly, knowing that nothing more was to be gained there, he took his departure, but, first saying:

"I am exceedingly, sorry, Miss Woodville, that you have refused my request, but, I cannot blame you. You are only acting, under the circumstances, as I should do."

CHAPTER X.

THE SPANISH SPY.

IMMEDIATELY upon quitting the presence of Valma Woodville, Fred came quite unexpectedly across the negro girl who had given him the information about her mistress.

"Ha!" said Fred, "I am glad that I met you. Do you know a man by the name of Villefort?"

"Yes, monsieur," replied the girl.

"You know well where he lives?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Good! Can you go there this afternoon?"

"I can try."

"Do so, and you will be well rewarded. Be there about four o'clock."

The girl promised to obey his orders as well as possible, and then Fred left her.

He had not proceeded far, when he was accosted by a tall, spare man, who was elegantly attired, and over whose shoulders was thrown a long traveling-cloak. His features, dark; and singularly handsome, were all but totally concealed by a wide, curious-fashioned sombrero.

"Victory," he said, in a low tone, as the villain approached him, but loud enough to be heard.

"Spain forever!" said Fred, coming to a quick halt.

"Your name?" demanded the other.

"Fred Lorraine, in his Majesty's cause," answered the villain.

"Good!" exclaimed the stranger. "You are my man. I am Juan Rodrigo."

"Ha! I did not expect you quite so soon."

"Nevertheless, matters can be arranged as well now as later."

"Certainly."

Side by side, the two walked on together, until the Red Lion Inn was reached. Entering it, the stranger asked to be shown a private room, where he and his companion would not be disturbed, as they had, he said, important business to transact.

The stranger's request was no sooner uttered than complied with. After he had securely barred the door against all intruders, Rodrigo—such was his name—placed his sombrero on the table, and seated himself.

"Now," he said, "to business. Of course, you know who I am?"

"I do," said Fred,

"You know, of course, that it is our admiral's intention to descend at the first opportunity upon Port au Prince, which is, and for a long time has been, a nest for those pirates who play so much deviltry with our commerce. Am I not correct monsieur?"

"Quite so," was the answer.

"The opportunity," the Spaniard continued, "for a successful attack may never come, unless, by stratagem, the pirates who infest these shores can be drawn away. To attack the city with them for its defenders, would be not only absurdity, but sheer madness."

"That opportunity, senor, *will* come."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Spaniard, half-rising from his seat. "When?"

Fred hesitated; but, a moment after, he pulled from his breast-pocket, a piece of writing-paper, small in size, and neatly folded.

"This would inform you," he said, "if you possessed it."

"How high do you value it?" asked Rodrigo.

"At one thousand five hundred doubloons."

Without a moment's hesitation, the Spaniard replied:

"The price is high, but, if the information be worth it, the amount you ask will be paid."

"Listen, Senor Rodrigo. For several months past, the buccaneers have been preparing for an attack upon one of the richest towns in Central America. This piece of paper contains a note, written by Montbars—you have heard of him, of course?—to Du Ambray, another buccaneer captain. The note mentions the name of the city the buccaneers mean to ransack, as well as the date they have decided upon. Will that information be worth the amount?"

The Spaniard had listened to these words with deep interest.

"Yes," he answered. "Deliver that note to me, and I will give you an order for your money."

Without more delay, Fred handed him the piece of paper.

With an expression impossible to depict, the Spaniard opened the note, and eagerly devoured every word it contained. It ran as follows:

"SCHOONER ACHILLES, July 21st, 1653.

"MONSIEUR:—This is to inform you that an expedition is now being organized for the purpose of capturing and appropriating to ourselves the city of Porto Bello, situated on the Isthmus of Panama. As you are well aware, this place is well stored with Spanish gold, and promises fair to well repay us for its subjugation. If you feel desirous of adding to the strength of our undertaking, I shall feel the better pleased. Therefore, you will be at the harbor of San Jose not later than the 30th of September, as the expedition leaves there on the first of October.

MONTBARS.

"To M. DU AMBRAY."

"This," said Rodrigo, carefully refolding the letter, and placing it in his pocket, "is more than I expected to learn. This will enable us to accomplish two important things—one, to more thoroughly fortify Porto Bello, the most wealthy seaport town we possess; and, next, when to decide upon the attack upon this place. Now, then, the next step I must take, is to learn the name of the principal traders in Port au Prince, who, to your certain knowledge, mind, have dealings with the pirates—the merchants

who purchase from the sea-robbers what they take from us."

"Ha!" said the traitor. "There are many such in Port au Prince, senor, I can assure you."

"So I have been informed before. Their names?"

"Well, the first that I may as well begin with is a crafty old fox, whose riches would be hard to estimate. He keeps—for a sort of a blind—an exchange. But this I well know, that last year he sent to France nine cargoes of silks and velvets, which were certainly not produced in Hispaniola."

"No!" replied the Spaniard, fiercely. "They were made in France, bought by Spanish money, then wrested from them by pirates! His name, monsieur?"

"M. Jean Hautville," said the villain. This was the name of the father of her whom he had professed to love—Therese.

Rodrigo drew from his pocket a small, ivory tablet, and wrote thereon the name, "M. Jean Hautville."

"Now for the next on the list," said he, when this was done.

"The next is another of the same stamp, who is the owner of the finest residence on the island, and the prettiest, as well as the most self-willed daughter. His name is Woodville."

That name was also placed on the tablet.

Other names—many of them—were given in quick succession, until the informer told the Spaniard that he had come to the end of his list.

A few more words, of only minor importance, followed; then the two arose, and left the inn together. Once outside, however, each took a different direction, Fred taking that which led to a small, dilapidated structure nearly half a mile outside the city limits. Arrived there, he entered without further ceremony.

"Is M. Villefort in?" he inquired of a woman whom he saw.

Without replying, she pointed toward an adjoining room.

Fred opened the door and entered. His eye fell upon a bed; upon it lay a man, sound asleep. This man was a horrible specimen, a dwarf in stature, with an immense head, a face worse than savage in expression, over which fell masses of thick, matted hair. The man's name was Villefort.

Fred gave his arm a jerk, which awoke the sleeper instantly. As his eye lit upon the young man, he gave a nod and smile of recognition. Evidently the two were old acquaintances.

Late that night two figures crept cautiously into the dwelling of Mr. Woodville.

The figures were those of Fred Lorraine and Villefort. With the aid of the negro girl, who acted as Valma's maid, their access to the building had been easy. The girl stood there, trembling like an aspen.

Fred seized her roughly by the arm.

"Now, then," he said, in a whisper, "show us where she sleeps."

Fearing to disobey, the girl beckoned them to follow her. She led them along a short passageway, then pointed to a door.

Fred approached this, and commenced to cau-

tiously push it open. Wider and wider the opening grew, until the space was sufficiently large to admit the villain. He was quickly, but cautiously, followed by Villefort.

The next thing the latter did was to produce a curious specimen of a dark-lantern, of his own manufacture, which served to light the room sufficiently for their purpose.

This was no sooner done, than the sight that met their eyes caused their movements to be for a moment arrested. Lying in sweet repose upon her bed, in the further end of the room, was Valma Woodville. Her beautiful hair, which was the envy of all the others of her sex on the island, lay in thick masses around her face—her face that at that moment of her peril was lit up with a smile, as, in her dreams, she thought her beloved one stood beside her. The smile then left her face, and, turning over uneasily on her pillow, she pronounced the word:

"Henry!"

With his brain in a whirl of excitement, his breath hot, with hurried breathing, Fred is at the bedside of the sleeper. He clutches at her arm; and she wakes on the instant!

"The torn letter! The torn letter!" he said, hoarsely.

She to whom the words were addressed was too terrified to speak. She opened her mouth, as if to scream. Villefort raised his hand, and would have struck her down if she had!

With her mouth and eyes stretched open to their widest extent, she sat up in her bed. Her eyes rolled from side to side—her fingers worked convulsively. Heavens! She was going mad—mad from terror!

Villefort was the first to perceive this.

"Come," he whispered to Fred, "we can gain nothing by staying here."

He sprang toward the door, the other following him.

"The moment they disappeared, the spell that had bound Valma was broken; and her terror broke forth in one wild, awful shriek, and then she fell, fainting, back on her pillow.

Her parents and a servant or two, hearing the scream, ran to her room. Medical aid was sent for immediately.

When the doctor arrived, the young girl had just recovered from her fainting-fit.

Without a single question, the medical gentleman informed M. Woodville that his daughter had received a violent shock to her mind, the consequence of which would terminate in, probably, brain-fever.

CHAPTER XI.

A QUEER PRISON.

IN the mean time, where was Fred and his companion?

In order to answer the question, we must return to the negro girl, whom we left standing in the door of the passageway, after pointing out to the villains the room in which her young mistress slept.

Thoughts of how Valma had so often befriended her rushed across her mind with terrible force. Oh! that her love of bright money could have caused her to betray the confidence placed in her.

A wild thought suddenly seized hold of her, and the thought was executed at once.

At the commencement of the passageway were three or four loose, short planks, which, on being removed, revealed an orifice in the ground, at least five feet in diameter. This had originally been a well, but was now dry. It was, the girl knew, about fifteen feet to the bottom.

She knew that the two villains would have to pass out that way, and, as certain as they did, they would tumble into the well, and perhaps both be killed. Then her treachery would never be discovered.

She began to grow impatient. Every moment seemed to her an hour.

At last, however, they came—came with quick, hurried footsteps. Three seconds later, both lay at the bottom of the well, stunned and motionless. The girl heard the scream Valma gave, and, quick as thought, replaced the boards in their position, and flew to her own room.

Villefort was the first of the wretches who arose to his feet, after recovering from his fall, and made the discovery that they were in a trap. He stretched forth his hand, and it came in contact with the cold, damp wall. At that moment Fred also arose.

"Where are we?" he asked.

"In a sort of close place," answered Villefort. "It appears to me to be an old, dried-up well."

"How, in God's name," asked the other, in a voice hoarse from fright, "came we here? We must have taken the wrong way when we left the room."

"No," said Villefort, "I think not. I feel positive that there is but one way from the girl's room to the outside. Hark, how they're tramping about over our heads! If the girl gets over the fright we gave her it will surprise me."

"Do you think, Villefort, that they know we are here?"

"I don't know. We shall know, though, in the morning."

Shortly before daylight, the negro girl, perceiving that the household had again become quiet, stealthily approached the well. She then removed one of the boards, and placed her face close to the aperture, and called out Villefort's name.

"Well," was the reply, "what is it?"

"Are you alive?"

"Yes."

"Both of you?"

"Both of us."

The girl's heart sunk within her. The fall, then, had not killed them, and she was at a loss what to do next. She wished from the bottom of her heart that she had the courage to end their existence there and then. She knew well that she possessed the means, but lacked the confidence in herself to put the means into action.

"Can't you help us out of this? Remember, you won't receive the money we owe you if we are caught."

Money! That was as dirt to her now.

"No," she answered. "It is impossible to do that now. But I will at the first opportunity."

It may be some time before the chance comes. Don't make a noise. Nobody knows you are here but me. I will let you have plenty to eat and drink every day."

She silently replaced the board, and went in search of food for them. She procured sufficient to last the two all day, placed it in a basket, with a small earthen jug of water, and let it down the well.

Several days passed. Each day the two prisoners had been furnished with enough to eat and drink, and promised their freedom as soon as it was possible for the girl to attempt it without fear of discovery.

Among the slaves of Mr. Woodville was a negro called Pepe, a monster in size, a savage in disposition. This Pepe entertained an affection for the negro girl with whom we have to do, which fact the girl herself was well acquainted with. She accordingly resolved to make the best of it.

One evening, just at dusk, she surprised the negro in the garden, just as he was returning from his work.

"Pepe," she said, "you pretend to like me. Do you?"

"Waugh! You orto know dat, Marcy," said Pepe.

"Well, I have something to tell you, if you promise me not to say a word to any one."

"Waugh! Obeah forbid my sayin' a word, Marcy."

"Well, Pepe, listen. A few nights ago—the night when Mademoiselle Valma was taken sick—two men came into the house to carry me and her off."

Pepe's eyes flashed fire, and he uttered an exclamation of anger.

"But," the girl continued, "I found out they were coming, and laid a trap for them. Well, Pepe, when they came, both fell into it."

Pepe gave vent to a grunt of surprise and satisfaction.

"Yes, Pepe, I caught them in the well, and they are there now. I want you to help me—"

"What?" said the negro, ere she had time to finish the sentence, his eyes lit up with an expression at once savage and impatient.

"Smother them," she said, in a whisper.

"I'll do dat, Marcy," returned the negro, in a very low tone. "I'll do it dis berry night. Waugh! I'll l'arn 'em to come an' try carry you off. When I come under your winder to-night an' whistle you come out."

So saying, the negro walked away, the words that the girl had told him having aroused his savage nature to its highest pitch.

The hours went by. Not long before midnight, the negro girl was aroused from the half-slumber into which she had fallen by the sound of a low whistle beneath her window. She knew that the time for Pepe to come had arrived. The whistle was his signal.

Rising from the bed, upon which she had throw herself dressed, she walked softly as a cat to the door. Cautiously opening this, she passed from the room to the outside of the house. Softly as she trod, the quick ear of Pepe caught the sound.

"Dat you, Marcy?" he asked, in a whisper.

"Yes," answered the girl.

"Come, den. All is ready."

The two reached the well, and the girl lifted up one of the loose boards.

In the mean time, Pepe prepared for his share of the work. He had brought with him an old iron kettle, half-filled with lighted charcoal, an armful of dried weeds, whose name and use were well-known to him. He placed the kettle down and the weeds beside it.

"Now, Marcy, gal, stand aside. You ain't so used to dese t'ings as I is."

The girl accordingly stepped a few paces away.

Pepe took a large handful of the noxious weeds, and held them over the lighted charcoal until they took fire. Then, with a quick motion, he threw them into the dark well. This was quickly repeated—repeated until the weeds were no longer to be seen. Then he replaced the board the girl had removed, and carried the pot of charcoal outside of the passage into the open air. The girl followed him.

"Pepe," she said, "how are we to get them out? It will never do to let them stay in the well."

"Waugh! no. In an hour de stink o' de weeds 'll be gone, an' I'll go down fur dem. Den we kin bury 'em."

The girl agreed to the proposition at once.

An hour passed, and Pepe then prepared to descend into the well. He unwound from around his waist a long and stout rawhide rope, which he fastened to something which would stand the stress of his weight. He gave a few directions to the girl; and a moment afterward he was sliding down the rope.

The girl waited impatiently for what next would happen. Supposing the two prisoners were not dead?

She was startled by an exclamation from Pepe.

"Waugh! Marcy!"

"What is it, Pepe?" nervously said the girl, in a voice just loud enough for him to hear.

"Dere's nobody hyur!"

"What!" she exclaimed. "Surely you must be mistaken. I spoke to them this very afternoon!"

But the negro did not answer her, for he was climbing up the rope with all his might. He was not long in reaching the top, and stepping once more upon *terra firma*.

"No, Marcy, gal," he said, "dem two war too quick. Dey've made holes on both sides ob de well, an' clum out."

CHAPTER XII.

TOGETHER.

IMMERSED in deep thought, Therese Hautville was seated in the very room we found her when first introduced to the reader.

She was thinking—thinking of one whom she scarcely knew, but whom she loved better than life itself. It was not Montbars—it was not Fred. It was Henry Lorraine!

That very day she had visited Valma Woodville, in hopes of learning something of him. Her visit had well repaid her. She had learned many things.

She had learned why it was that the two cousins were heart-foes to each other. She had

heard how Henry Lorraine had made Valma his confidante, and intrusted her with the half of the letter he prized so highly—how Fred had imprisoned his cousin, and hid him she knew not where. But Therese Hautville knew that Henry Lorraine must have effected his escape, for that very day, she had seen him, along with Montbars, in Port au Prince.

"And so," she said to herself, as she sat there, "Valma Woodville loves him, and expects to win his love by keeping that torn letter he prizes so much. What"—and the thought caused her eyes to sparkle—"if I could obtain the other half of that letter—nay—obtain both halves, and deliver them to Henry Lorraine, would he not love me? Yes, he would. I shall try the experiment."

At that moment her servant announced the arrival of Fred Lorraine.

Therese gave orders for him to be admitted; and a moment later the villain entered the room.

His eyes seemed dull and listless, and he carried himself unsteadily. Therese at once divined the cause. Fred had, she knew, been drinking. Nevertheless, this, far from displeasing her, caused her spirits to become lighter.

"Well, Fred," she said, in a tone as if she were displeased, "you have not been to see me for some time."

"No," he stammered. "The fact is, Therese, I've been in a bad sort of place for some time. Got caged up, like a frog, in a well."

"I knew something unusual must have kept you away. You look tired. Lie down upon the sofa?"

"Yes," drawled out the intoxicated wretch, throwing himself down at full length upon the sofa, "I feel worn out. Just come from a visit to that nigger medicine-man, Jongshay, whom I hired to do some business for me."

Without noticing his words, Therese stepped from the apartment into an adjoining one, and half-filled a wine-glass with wine. To this she added, from a small vial which she took from a locked drawer, a few drops of a yellow-colored fluid.

Returning to the room she had just left, Therese approached the sofa, and handed Fred the glass.

"Here," she said, "drink this. It will refresh you."

Fred swallowed the mixture at a gulp; and then handed her back the glass. She placed it upon the stand, then took a seat and watched his motions with great anxiety.

But this was needless; for scarcely had five minutes passed before his eyes began to close, and his breathing became more regular and deep. The narcotic she had administered was beginning to show its effects.

Five minutes more and his eyes were closed fast. Ten minutes more and Therese saw by the change in his countenance that the narcotic was acting with its utmost power.

The time for her to act had come.

Once more approaching the sofa, she knelt down by the sleeper's side, and, with amazing rapidity, pulled forth the contents of his pockets, which contents were as quickly replaced, when she discovered what she sought for was not there.

She began to despair. Where could the letter be? Perhaps in his shoe.

The thought no sooner struck her than it was acted upon. She unbuckled one of his shoes and drew it off his foot. To her joy, a piece of paper, torn and crumpled, fell upon the floor. With the rapidity of lightning, Therese seized it, and thrust it into her bosom. She then replaced Fred's shoe and fastened it as it had been before.

With her heart beating with excitement, Therese left the sleeper to himself, and quitted the room. She then gave orders for her horse to be saddled with all possible haste.

It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon.

Therese donned her hat, and placed the small vial of the fluid which she had administered to Fred in her pocket. She then was ready for her ride.

Her horse was soon saddled and brought to the door. Therese mounted, and set off at a gallop for the residence of Mr. Woodville.

Half an hour or less brought her to the door, where she quickly dismounted, handed the bridle to a servant, and at once sought the apartment of Valma.

The young girl had but lately recovered from the fever which had followed her fright, and Therese found her seated in a large arm-chair, eating an orange.

"Ha, Valma!" exclaimed Therese, as she entered the room. "Here again, you see. Guess who I saw a short time ago?"

A slight flush appeared on Valma's cheeks, and her eyes sparkled with anticipated surprise.

"It can not be—no, it can not be—be Henry?" she half asked.

"Yes—it was Henry."

With these words she threw her arms around Valma's neck—an act which surprised the latter exceedingly. Usually Therese's manner was so calm and undemonstrative.

The two females conversed for some time when Therese proposed to while away the time by reading aloud. To this Valma agreed; and, taking from the case a book of a nature any thing but interesting to a young girl in love, Therese commenced reading aloud its dry pages.

The result was as she had foreseen. Scarcely fifteen minutes elapsed, ere Valma Woodville fell into a quiet slumber. The former laid aside the book she held; and, approaching the bedside, drew from her pocket the vial. This was uncorked, placed close to the sleeper's lips, and a drop or more allowed to trickle upon them.

The narcotic had the same effect upon Valma that it had upon Fred. She fell into a sleep from which the roar of a thousand cannon could not have awakened her.

Therese then first secured the bedroom door, and commenced to search for the piece of paper which she knew Valma guarded so carefully.

For a long time her pains were unrewarded. Drawer after drawer was opened and carefully searched; still, that which she sought was not to be found as yet.

She was about to give up in despair, when her eye lit upon a small, handsomely-finished jewel-case. She opened this, and an exclamation of

delight escaped her. The case contained a small scrap of paper, which was hurriedly grasped. She compared the handwriting with that upon the piece of paper in her breast. It was the same. The discovery caused her to almost scream aloud for joy. She remained there no longer. Meeting a servant in the hall, she admonished her that Valma was sound asleep, and that it would be better not to disturb her, as what she needed most was rest.

Therese found her steed at the door, waiting for her. She leaped upon the animal's back, and was soon galloping away in the direction of her home.

Arrived there, she gave her steed in charge of a servant, and proceeded at once to the room where she had left Fred. He was not there. He had, she learned, awoke from his sleep about an hour after her departure, and at once took his leave, without as much as asking after Therese.

But she cared little for this. Her mind was too much occupied with the letter she was in possession of. She proceeded at once to her room.

Drawing from her bosom the two scraps of paper, each useless by itself, she placed the pieces close together.

Slowly and carefully, for the writing was scarcely legible, she read as follows—read with a heart beating strong with surprise and gratification:

"PORT AU PRINCE, DEC. 15, 16—.

"DEAR SON:—

"Before this letter reaches its destination, I shall be no more. I am dying fast. Even as I write, the fever is scorching my very veins.

"It is now ten years since I left England and during the time, have succeeded in amassing a large fortune, consisting of diamonds, gold and silver to the value of upward of fifty thousand pounds sterling. This I have buried, in order that none save yourself can possibly discover it. About three miles from Port au Prince there is a cave known as the 'Robber's Cavern.' Just as the sun rises, take twenty paces from the mouth due-east, then advance forward one hundred feet due-north, and you will, after digging down a foot or more, come upon a small stone, marked thus: 'X L I.' Beneath the stone lies the treasure. Adieu, my son, forever.

"JAMES LORRAINE."

"Ha!" Therese exclaimed, as she finished reading the strange epistle. "No wonder Fred Lorraine prized that letter so highly. The possession of it would make him the richest man on the island. But shall he have it? No! It belongs to Henry—dear, dear Henry! When I place this in his hands, God grant that he may love me for it!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ACHILLES NO MORE.

WE must now return to our hero, Henry Lorraine.

Immediately upon witnessing the upshot of the quarrel between the two buccaneers, he wandered out upon the edge of a high cliff overhanging the ocean, and seated himself. His mind was busily engaged in forming plans for the future; and so engrossed was he that the hours glided away as if they had been but moments.

It was not until he was admonished by a shrill

whistle that it was nearly sundown, and time to repair to the Achilles, as she weighed exactly at sundown, bound for Port au Prince.

Henry was not long in finding his way down to the beach, where a boat was waiting to convey him to the vessel. There he found all the crew aboard, as well as Montbars.

The captain passed the word to weigh, which order was obeyed with alacrity. Along with Henry Lorraine, Montbars was about to descend into the cabin, when an object close to the side of the vessel caught his glance. That object was a boat, and contained a solitary individual, who no sooner perceived that Montbars was gazing at him, than he cried out:

"Hallo! Ish you the captain of dat sheep?"

"I am," answered the buccaneer, amused at the Jew's accent.

"Ach! Dat ish goot. I am a poor mansh, and would like besser nor anyding else to go to Port au Prinsh. You take me?"

"What may be your business there, my good man?" inquired Montbars.

"Ach!" responded the Israelite. "I ish a poor man, who makes his leetle monish by trading, and such dings."

"Well," said Montbars, "come aboard."

"Ach! Dat ish goot. I must take mein boat, ash well."

The Israelite paddled his boat to the stern of the vessel, and fixed it by its painter in such a manner that it would not interfere with the working of the rudder. Then a rope was thrown to him, and he climbed aboard.

Montbars retired to his cabin, leaving Henry, at his own request, upon deck.

By this time the sails of the Achilles had been unfurled, and she was bounding over the waves like a duck, and at the rate of seven knots an hour. At that rate of speed, Port au Prince would be reached at midnight.

Guided by an uncontrollable curiosity, Henry Lorraine took a stand near the mainmast of the vessel, and kept a close eye upon the movements of the Jew trader. The latter was walking slowly up and down the deck, his hands clasped behind his back, and his small and crafty eyes carefully noting down everything transpiring.

This had been continued for nearly an hour, when the eyes of the trader happened to fall upon Henry, who was carefully noting his every movement. The Jew walked toward him at once.

"Ach!" he said, as he halted a few feet from the young man. "Dish ish a very nice sheep. Sailsh goot."

"Yes," answered Henry, "she is a very fast sailer."

"Yesh, so I hash bert. How many mensh has she aboard?"

"About three hundred," was the answer.

"Ach! Dat ish a goot crew—yesh, a very goot crew. Vell, mein goot young mansh, v'at may be the captainsh name, eh?"

"His name," answered Henry, "is Montbars—Jacques Montbars."

Immediately upon hearing this, without uttering another syllable, the Jew resumed his walk up and down the deck.

With his suspicions more than ever aroused, Henry Lorraine immediately sought the pres-

ence of Montbars, whom he found in his cabin, busily engaged in studying a chart which lay upon a table before him.

"Captain Montbars," said the young man, "what is your opinion of that trader who came aboard at San Jose?"

"Well," answered Montbars, quietly looking up, "I have seen so little of the man that to form an opinion at present is impossible."

"Well, my opinion of him is this—he is neither Jew nor trader. He is a villain! Since the moment his foot touched the deck, I have carefully noticed his movements, and I saw more than one thing which led me to conclude that he is not what he seems. Did you ever see him before?"

"Never," answered Montbars, beginning to feel interested in what the other said.

"Nor have I."

"You do not believe, then, M. Lorraine, that he is either a Jew or a trader?"

"Most certainly I do not."

"What, then, do you think he is?"

"An emissary of the king of Spain."

"What!" exclaimed the sharper, springing to his feet.

Henry Lorraine repeated his words.

With an exclamation of anger and astonishment, the buccaneer chief strode toward the cabin door, jerked it open, and sprung upon deck. The young man followed him.

By this time it was quite dusk. Not a trace of the suspected spy was to be seen.

"Goss," shouted Montbars, to one of the sailors, whose watch it was, "what has become of that Jew that came aboard at San Jose?"

"Can't say, captain. The last I saw of him was, he was standing near the hatchway."

"Perhaps he is in the hold."

At that moment, a head and shoulders appeared above the hatchway, which was recognized as being those of the Jew trader.

Montbars walked quickly toward him.

"Who are you?" he demanded in a voice of thunder.

"Ach! Ash I told you before, mein captain, I ish a trader."

"I am not satisfied," said Montbars.

The Jew started.

"We must search you," continued the buccaneer.

"Never!" yelled the other, and, with a quick motion, he turned toward the stern of the vessel.

So unexpectedly had the disguise been thrown off, that Montbars was struck, for the moment, dumb with surprise. It was only Henry who possessed enough presence of mind to endeavor to detain the Spaniard's flight.

"Halt!" he commanded. "You are our prisoner!"

"That," returned the spy, "remains to be proved," and with these words, he whipped from his belt a pistol, aimed it, and pulled the trigger. The bullet just grazed the young man's arm, scarcely drawing blood.

The sound of the shot brought the buccaneer to his senses, and, with the roar of an enraged lion, he sprung forward. But the fugitive was too quick for him, for with a sudden leap he reached the taffrail of the vessel. The rope lad-

der was still hanging over the side, and this served him to reach his boat in a twinkling. Then drawing forth a keen-edged knife, he severed the painter in an instant, and was soon drifting away.

Montbars had followed him, and stood leaning over the taffrail, uttering curse after curse at the fugitive, when a loud cry, full of fearful import reached his ears.

"Fire! Quick! The hold is in flames!"

Allowing a fearful oath that had risen within him to die on his lips, the buccaneer chief rushed toward the hatchway, around which had already assembled a score of the crew, and up which arose cloud after cloud of black smoke. Far below could be heard the fearful crackling of the flames, as they devoured whatever came in their way.

Montbars saw that to stay their progress was an impossibility.

"To the boats! To the boats! my brave fellows! Quick, or the fire may reach the powder before we are off!"

Without a word to betray the terror the buccaneers could but have felt, they set quickly to work. Those were not the men to give way to despair. The boats, five in number, were lowered, and the men took their places in them.

"Whers's the captain?" asked a voice.

For a moment there was no response.

"Captain!" shouted a hundred voices.

Montbars's voice answered not.

"Why," said Henry Lorraine, "he was standing by my side not more than three minutes ago. Perhaps he is in the cabin. Wait, and I'll see."

The young man quickly reached the deck, and as quickly found himself in the cabin.

The place was full of smoke, and half-stifled him as he entered. The name of the buccaneer chief rose to his lips, but he felt too choked to give it utterance. He turned on his heel, and was about to rush upon deck, when his foot came in contact with some soft object upon the cabin floor. It was but the work of an instant to stoop down and place his hand upon that object.

A slight exclamation escaped Henry; it was Montbars.

Powerful as Henry Lorraine was, for a young man, the excitement of the moment gave him unusual strength. He grasped the buccaneer chief in his arms, and carried the heavy man on deck as if he had been an infant.

"Come!" he shouted to the men in the boats, "lend a hand here. Your captain is unable to walk."

Several of the buccaneers sprung on deck, and in a very few moments their brave commander lay in the bottom of one of the boats, still unconscious. In one of his hands he grasped a miniature painting. For this he had gone into his cabin, and which had so nearly cost him his life. Lorraine could not see the picture then, but he knew well who it represented. Montbars had once shown it to him. It was the portrait of Therese Hautville.

No time was lost in shoving the boats from the vessel, and rowing away as fast as possible.

Scarcely a hundred rods lay between them and the burning vessel when the explosion, the buccaneers had dreaded so much, came. A

lurid streak of light was seen to suddenly shoot up high in the air, quickly followed by a loud report. A dozen seconds more, and all that remained of the buccaneer vessel was a few blackened chips.

The fearful report brought Montbars once more into the full possession of his faculties, and, without asking a moment's respite, and instantly divined the situation of the vessel.

"Alas! my brave fellows," he rose to a sitting posture, "the Achilles is now among the things that were! Many's the cruise we've taken in her, and many's the Spaniard her guns have battered in pieces. But never mind. Your captain is not poor, and soon you shall see his flag again flying at the mast-head of another vessel, as noble and grand as was the Achilles."

A wild hurrah of delight pealed from the throats of the buccaneers at this; and they bent again on their oars with renewed energy.

Montbars informed his men that not more than five miles lay between them and the northern coast of Hispaniola, and that an hour or more of hard rowing would bring them there.

His words proved to be correct, for in an hour's time not more than fifty rods intervened between the boats and the shore. By this time the moon had risen, and her light enabled them to see a long distance over the water. All at once the eyes of the buccaneer caught sight of an object at some distance out on the water, about half a mile to the east of them.

"What can that be?" he said, raising his hand and pointing toward the object.

Three hundred pairs of eyes were instantly turned in the direction.

"A boat," suggested several.

"Ay," said another. "Ten Spanish doubloons against one that that is the Spaniard who fired the ship!"

The words were no sooner spoken than a vengeful yell rung over the water. It reached the ears of him far out on the waves, and he knew he was doomed should the buccaneers reach him. He plied his oars with all his energy, for he saw that the buccaneers had turned the bows of their boats toward him, and were every moment lessening the distance that lay between.

For a time it was hard to tell whether or not the fugitive would escape, for he used his oars with the energy of despair.

But the Spaniard's hopes, if he had any, were soon doomed to be destroyed. Scarcely a dozen rods from the shore, the foremost of the buccaneer boats was alongside the Spaniard's, and one of the former, stretching forth his hand, seized the spy by the collar, and jerked him into his own boat.

Preserving strict silence, the buccaneers rowed quickly ashore. Here they disembarked, and immediately set about the disposal of their prisoner.

Was he to be shot? No, he was to suffer a fate far more horrid than that? He knew this, and the knowledge caused him to tremble like an aspen.

Then, at a signal from their chief, the buccaneers dragged the Spaniard to some distance off, and left him to die when he would.

The buccaneers passed the night upon the spot;

and daybreak found them on the lookout for the first passing vessel which would carry them to Port au Prince.

CHAPTER XIV.

TREASURE.

The captain's events recorded in the last chapter were observed by Henry in Port au Prince, having taken up his quarters in the "Red Lion Inn."

One evening, between the hours of six and seven, as the young man was enjoying a cigarette on the balcony of the inn, he was disturbed by a negro boy touching him on the arm, and asking:

"You's Mr. Lorraine, sah?"

"Yes, my boy. What do you want?"

"I beg pardon, sah, but what is your fu'st name?"

"Well," replied the young man, smiling, "that is rather a queer question for you to ask. However, I don't mind telling you. My first name is Henry."

"Den this is for you, sah."

The boy pulled forth from his pocket a letter. Henry took it, and glanced at the superscription; "M. Henry Lorraine."

He tore open the cover, and the next instant started back with a face pale as ashes. But this soon gave way to a flushed cheek and look of joyful surprise. The envelope had contained two letters—one written in a hand unknown to him before, the other in a hand he had often seen.

"Thank God!" he ejaculated. "My father's letter!"

He placed the two scraps together, and read every line from beginning to end. Then he placed each piece carefully in his breast-pocket, and opened the other letter. It ran thus:

"M. LORRAINE:—

"SIR:—Though I have met you but once, I feel a friendship for you which time will never alter. Each day the feeling grows upon me more and more, and do all I may, I cannot prevent it. I know your history, and that more than ever made me take an interest in you. Accept, therefore, the letter which you value so much, as a tribute of affection from her whom you know only by name.

"THERESE HAUTVILLE."

"Theresa Hautville!" exclaimed Henry, as he finished the epistle. "Why that is the name of her I met on the night Valma and I were overtaken by the storm, and who is engaged to Montbars! Why should she take such an interest in me? And what is more, how came she to get hold of my father's letter? I cannot understand it."

He turned to the boy, who was still waiting.

"Tell Mademoiselle Hautville," said the young man, "that she has done me a service which I can never forget. My best wishes for her welfare will always be hers, and, with God's help, I may some day be able to repay her. You may go."

With a polite bow, the negro boy walked away.

The young man decided that it would be the best plan for him to seek the "Robber's Cavern" that very night, as the darkness would serve to screen him from any observer, chance or otherwise,

He provided himself with a shovel, and ordered his horse to be saddled at once. This being done, as soon as darkness came on, he mounted and rode at a brisk gallop toward the open country.

He kept on until six miles or so had been passed over, then suddenly turned sharply to the left, and entered a sort of ravine.

Henry knew from the wind which had risen, and kept momentarily increasing, and from the black skies which obscured the sky, that a storm was brewing. His steed, too, seemed to be aware of it, for he pricked up his ears, and anon gave vent to a loud snort.

A ride of a mile and a half more brought him to a pile of immense rocks, which towered up for upward of a hundred feet above the ground. It was the spot known as the "Robber's Cavern," from the well-known fact that it had once been the hiding-spot of the famous buccaneer, Solonnois, and his followers.

Young Lorraine dismounted, and led his steed toward a wide aperture between two rocks. On, on they passed, until a score of rods intervened between them and the mouth of cave.

By this time the hurricane had commenced. The rain was falling in torrents, and the thunder echoed again and again, as it pealed through the ravine.

Feeling tired and weary, the young man unrolled a blanket which he had brought with him, enveloped himself in it, and lay down upon the cavern floor. Ere long he slept.

He must have been unconscious for some hours, for, when he awoke, it was by the sound of voices. The storm had long since died away and he could hear the noise very plainly.

The young man rose silently to his feet, and listened. Away toward the mouth of the cavern, he could perceive the lurid glare of a fire, kindled, he surmised, by some travelers who had been overtaken by the rain, and decided, like himself, to pass the night in the cavern.

He was about to content himself with this conclusion, and lie down again, when the sound of one of the voices caused him to change his mind. He knew (although he could not see his face) well the owner of that voice. It was his cousin Fred's.

Drawn by a strong feeling of curiosity, with the step of a cat, the young man moved toward the fire. He approached until not a dozen yards lay between him and the mouth of the cavern, where he had nothing to prevent his ears and eyes from taking every thing in that transpired before him.

Around the fire which they had kindled were seated two persons—two which were well known to him. They were Fred and Pierre The Savage.

What motive brought them there? Henry listened.

"Well, Pierre," said Fred, "all I can say is, that my old uncle chose a devilish good place in which to hide his money, before he gave up the ghost. But, Pierre, you say that you knew my uncle. How did he get all his money, eh? By following the life of a buccaneer?"

"No, M. Lorraine, not he. Your uncle was not like either you or me. He was an honest

man, respected alike by his countrymen, the French, and our enemies, the Spaniards. What money he made was done by fair-dealing."

"Well," answered Fred, "my uncle always acted fair toward me, I must allow. But 'get rich' is my motto, and I mean to stick to it, whether it must be done fair or not."

"But, to return to the letter. As we agreed to before, we'll let all past trouble between us be forgotten; and, by working with our heads and hands, we'll find that money yet. But, Pierre," continued Fred, with a cunning look at his companion, "what became of that half of the letter I gave you to take care of?"

"Ha!" answered Pierre, returning an equally cunning look, "that is a question I would rather not reply to. But I will say this much. One night I was surprised by a visit from that devil, Jongsbay. We drank a glass of wine each, and soon after I began to feel dizzy—dizzy, so that I could not walk a step."

"I soon fell into a sleep, and lo! when I awoke, nothing was to be seen of Jongsbay or your letter, M. Lorraine. Rather singular, was it not?"

"Yes," returned Fred, in a dry tone. Then, changing his tone, he added:

"Never mind the letter now. I wouldn't give a doubloon for it. Hope tells me that we shall succeed without it. Hand me that flask of brandy. This place fills me with strange fancies, it is so silent and ghost-like."

Had he known that a pair of eyes were gazing upon him as he uttered those words, the villain would have felt his flesh creep more than it did.

Pierre handed him a flask filled with brandy. He applied it to his lips, and swallowed a deep draught. Pierre followed his example.

The two kept up the conversation for some time longer; then rolled themselves in a blanket each, and lay down to sleep.

The thoughts of Henry Lorraine now turned upon his own situation. He knew from what he had heard that his cousin, having despaired of getting possession of the letter, had come bent upon searching for the treasure without. This was unfortunate.

Henry knew that the probability was that Fred and his companion would remain near the cave for several days, unless forced to leave. He did not fear about their finding the money, for the letter informed him that his father had too effectually concealed it for that.

He accordingly resolved to wait patiently for the morrow, and see what that would bring forth. He knew that it was possible for them to despair of success, and leave the place of their own accord.

The young man returned to the spot where he had left his faithful steed, and again lay down to rest. But, so agitated were his feelings, that sleep refused to come again that night.

Hours passed, and at last a gray light began to dawn in the east.

Before the sun was half an hour high, Fred and his companion awoke, breakfasted upon something they had provided for the occasion, and then quitted the cavern. Each held in his hand a shovel.

They had no sooner passed outside, than Henry pressed forward as near to the mouth as he dare to go without fear of discovery, and kept a close watch upon their movements.

"Now, Pierre," said Fred, "our best course would be to mark off a square of ground at a time, and when we have searched well there, mark off another, and keep on thus until we have dug up every inch of ground around. I remember that the letter stated that it was not more than one hundred and fifty feet from the mouth of the cavern where the treasure lies."

Pierre did not answer. It was evident that he knew the plan was easy enough to think about, but not so easy when it came to be put into practice.

A square of ground was marked off, and the two set to work.

For an hour both men worked as if life and death depended upon the issue.

Spade after spadeful of earth had been overturned, but no traces of the stone which marked the whereabouts of the buried treasure had been discovered.

Fred threw down his spade. The sun was streaming down with so intense a heat, that it made the sweat start from the two men at every pore.

"Ha!" said Pierre, with a light laugh. "You are tired already, eh?"

"Rather," was the answer. "The fact is, Pierre, I ain't used to that kind of work."

"Well, and so you mean to give up the idea, then?"

"No, not yet. Why do the work ourselves, Pierre? I can provide a man who will do my share of the work."

"So can I," replied the other.

After some deliberation, it was decided upon by the two men that they should at once return to Port au Prince, and engage the services of two men to do the work they had commenced, and if they succeeded in hitting upon the spot where the treasure lay, both men were to be shot upon the spot. Pshaw, they would never tell any tales.

Horrible as the plot was, both of the villains discussed it with the greatest of *sang froid*.

"Well," said Pierre, "when shall we begin afresh? To-morrow?"

"No," was the answer. "To-morrow is the second of October."

"Well, what of that?"

"Wait, and you will see."

It was not until three hours had elapsed from the time that the two plotters had quitted the ravine, that Henry dared to lead his patient animal from the cave, mount, and set off in the very direction the two men had taken.

It was the second of October, and the hour of sunrise. The great orb of light had just risen above the far-distant horizon.

Alone, Henry Lorraine stood waiting at the mouth of the cavern, grasping in his hand the instrument with which he was to make the earth yield up her treasure.

The moment for him to act had arrived.

"God grant that it may be!" was his hurried exclamation.

Following implicitly the directions his father

had written, he measured carefully twenty paces in a straight line due eastward. This being done, he marked the spot with the shovel. He next produced a piece of cord from his pocket, measuring exactly one hundred feet in length. One end of this was fixed on the spot marked by the shovel, the other extremity was carried toward the north.

His heart beating with anxiety, Henry grasped the shovel and thrust it into the earth. Then, with a quick movement, it was withdrawn, bringing with it a quantity of earth. This was eagerly searched, and, to his joy, the young man was rewarded by the sight of the stone mentioned. It was some five inches in length, oblong in shape, and upon which were inscribed the characters, thus:

X L I.

Henry placed the stone in his pocket, and again stuck the spade in the ground. Down, down he dug, until the hole was nearly four feet in depth. The ring of the spade, as it came in contact with something as hard as itself, caused him who grasped it to suddenly pause, and tremble in every limb with excitement.

"It is true, then," he gasped. "The treasure is there."

He again grasped the spade. But, before he had time to again delve into the earth, a terrific sound caused him to stop on the instant. He listened.

Again and again the sound reached his ears, each time louder than before. He knew the meaning of it well.

It was the hoarse roar of cannon! It was the Spaniards! They were bombarding Port au Prince!

CHAPTER XV.

THE BOMBARDMENT.

THE young man remained not long inactive. Once more seizing the spade, he filled in the earth he had dug out, and made the spot appear as near as possible as if it had never been disturbed. His next movement was to hide the shovel.

His steed stood waiting for him just without the cavern. He sprang upon the animal's back, and turned its head in the direction of the city.

But one thought took possession of him, and that was of her whom he loved most upon earth—Valma Woodville.

He spurred his steed until the animal dashed forward at the top of its speed.

At last, slow as the speed at which he was going seemed to him, the city was reached. A glance told him the cause of the fearful noise that had disturbed him at his work.

At length, with his steed bathed in sweat, he reached the residence of M. Woodville.

He slid down from his saddle, and, without ceremony, entered. The first he met was his beloved.

"Valma!" he exclaimed, catching the lovely girl in his arms. "You must not remain here. The Spaniards have attacked Port au Prince. A party of them has landed; and, even at this moment, they are spreading destruction on every side."

"Oh! *mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed she. "My father, Henry! Where is he?"

Before the young man had time to reply, the lovers were attracted by the sound of a horse's footsteps, as he came forward at a gallop. A moment later, and the steed was halted before the door, and his rider descended quickly to the ground. It was M. Woodville.

He entered.

His eye fell upon his daughter and Henry Lorraine, standing side by side, his arm encircling her waist.

"Come, Valma!" he said, sternly, and seizing his child by her arm; "this is not the time for love-making! Come, let us fly! Even now the hated Spaniard is upon my track. Come!"

"Oh, father!" said Valma, half-resisting him, and casting a look full of helplessness at Henry; "I can not part with Henry! No, no! If I follow you, he, too, must be with us."

"We are able to take care of ourselves, Valma. A third party would be but a hindrance."

"Very well, Monsieur Woodville," said Henry, now speaking for the first time; "since you seem to desire it, I will quit your presence. Your daughter seems to think that I am abler to shield her than you, and I ask you to yield to her wishes."

"I will not!" exclaimed M. Woodville, in a voice of thunder. "She is my daughter!"

"And she," replied Henry Lorraine, in an equally loud tone, "is my promised wife. Now, judge, will you, who has the best right to protect her—you or I?"

"What!" yelled the infuriated father. "How dare you lie like this? You shall rue those words."

He took from his breast a small, finely finished poniard, and half-raised it aloft! Valma shrieked, and fell heavily to the floor.

But, before he could strike, a loud trampling of horses' feet reached their ears, causing him who held the dagger to look round. His eye fell upon a score of horsemen, the uniforms of which plainly showed him their errand. He turned pale in an instant. Why had he delayed so long?

"See!" said young Lorraine, pointing toward the Spaniards; "if you wish for blood, yonder is plenty."

His words had their effect. M. Woodville returned the dagger to its sheath.

"Come, M. Woodville," continued Henry, "out of respect for Valma, I am still your friend. Let us quarrel no longer. Every instant we delay, it gives the enemy a better chance to discover us. Is there no way by which we can escape from the house unobserved?"

"Yes," answered M. Woodville, casting toward the young man a look filled with remorse, "follow me."

Valma Woodville still lay unconscious. Her lover seized her in his Herculean arms, and followed M. Woodville, who led him through one or two rooms, until he came to a small closet, in which was a trap-door. This was opened, and the trio entered by means of it a narrow passageway in the ground.

Following the course of this for upward of a

hundred yards, it suddenly obliques sharply to the left. A dozen yards more, and the passage emerged into a small, dilapidated cabin, used by its owner as a sort of store-room.

By this time the Spaniards had dismounted, and the escape of M. Woodville must have been discovered, for they were giving vent to loud oaths, as well as rushing about over the grounds in every direction.

But a thick patch of shrubbery lay between them and the fugitives, rendering the escape of the latter certain. They passed outside the cabin, and kept on until they reached a road which Henry knew would lead them into the country beyond.

By this time the young girl had quite recovered herself, and was able to walk, thus enabling the fugitives to make good progress.

"This road will lead us, I believe," said M. Woodville to the young man, "to M. Hautville's."

Henry replied in the affirmative.

"Good!" exclaimed the other. "He is a friend of mine. Those fiends will not find me there, I'll wager."

A brisk walk of three miles brought them to a low, oddly-constructed building, owned by M. Hautville, and the abode of one of his slaves.

Without hesitation, the party entered. They were met face to face by an old negro woman, upon whose face was depicted terror beyond description.

"The Spaniards!" she ejaculated, on being questioned as to the cause of her fright.

"Where?" demanded Henry Lorraine.

She raised her hand, and pointed in the direction of the abode of M. Hautville, situated not more than a score of rods away, but concealed from their view by a thick growth of trees.

The woman's words caused Woodville to stagger backward.

"*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed. "What brought them here?"

As for Henry Lorraine, he had no sooner heard the words spoken than he said to Valma, slightly pressing her hand:

"Wait here. Therese Hautville, perhaps, is in danger, and I owe her a debt which I can never sufficiently cancel."

Had he been aware of the thoughts which passed through the young girl's mind, as he spoke, he would have hesitated. Valma Woodville knew well to what he referred, when her lover spoke of the favor Therese had done him; and she was also acquainted with the means by which the artful woman had accomplished her design. So excited was the young man's brain, when he had received the letter from Therese Hautville, it had never occurred to him to discover how she had obtained possession of the piece of paper he had placed in the care of Valma Woodville.

But she said nothing, and he opened the door of the cabin, and was gone. He quickly passed over the distance that lay between him and the abode of M. Hautville, secreted himself behind a clump of bushes, and waited for the moment which would enable him to gain the house, unperceived by at least a dozen men, in Spanish uniform, who stood on the outside.

The young man had not long to wait. A mo-

ment came when the attention of the Spaniards was attracted by a loud noise within the house. Taking advantage of this, Henry, unobserved, crossed a small piece of ground, and entered the house by a back entrance.

Seeing no one in the first room into which he entered, he cautiously made his way to the door of another, opened it an inch or more, and gazed through the aperture.

The apartment contained at least a dozen Spaniards, who were engaged at that moment in securing, with the aid of handcuffs, an individual different in appearance from the rest, both in looks and attire. This was M. Hautville.

Henry saw that to interfere then would be madness. Accordingly he turned his attention in another direction. Where was Therese? Ha! The sound of men's voices, mingled with the screams of a female, reached his ears. A moment later, and he enters the room from whence the sounds proceed. His eyes fall upon two men, each clothed in the rich trappings of a Spanish officer—one of them bearing in his arms a young and beautiful girl! It is Therese Hautville!

With the roar of a wounded panther, Henry Lorraine whips from its sheath a dagger, which glitters like his own eyes, as he raises it aloft.

An instant later, and it is drawn from the body of him who held in his arms the terrified girl, covered to the hilt with crimson blood!

The remaining officer, with the quickness of a cat, sprung toward the door, opened it, and darted through.

Without losing a second's time, young Lorraine set about securing the door. He piled several articles of furniture the room contained against it, in such a manner that it would be impossible to push it open.

By this time Therese had ceased to scream, but still trembled for her safety in every limb.

"There!" exclaimed Henry, as he finished barricading the door; "I don't think they will get in there, unless they take it into their heads to batter down the door. What I am afraid of is that."

He pointed toward a window in the further end of the room.

"If I were alone," he continued, "I would risk a dash for the woods."

"Why not with me?" asked Therese. "I am not a bad runner, I can assure you, monsieur."

"No, it would not be advisable to attempt it. There are too many of the devils guarding the outside. I wish your friend Montbars, Mademoiselle Hautville, and a dozen of his brave boys were here. We should soon see an entire change in the programme."

"Yes," said she, "I should like his services well—but, as for his company, I do not care enough about him for that. But, M. Lorraine, what could the buccaneers have been doing to let the Spaniards land?"

"Why?" said Henry, "have you not heard that the entire lot set out to attack Porto Bello? By this time they are miles away. Some traitor must have furnished the Spaniards with the information beforehand, and they no sooner saw the buccaneers out of the way, than they landed at Port au Prince."

Further conversation was here interrupted by some one coming to the door of the apartment, and endeavoring to open it, which effort proved useless.

The person then cried out something in Spanish, and immediately the shuffling of many feet, as they approached the door, could be heard.

"Open the door!" cried out a voice in French, but with an accent strongly Iberian.

Of course, no answer was received; the consequence of which was a constant battering upon the door, until it seemed as if the barrier must yield. But no, it was too firm and strong for that; and at last the besiegers paused.

Again did they issue a command for the door to be opened, and again did they meet with the same success as before—no answer was returned.

Why did they not seek to enter at the window? Possibly they knew not of its existence; or, if they did, in their excitement they might have forgotten it.

But, during this, Henry Lorraine had not been idle. He had learned, upon questioning Therese, that over the room they occupied was a sort of garret, that, once reached, would enable a person to descend, by means of a pair of stairs, into a passageway. Then, following the passage, it would lead them either into a cellar, or else a garden at the rear end of the building.

But how was the garret to be reached, was the next question?

Upon deliberation, and a glance upward at the ceiling, the thing did not look so formidable, however.

The young man drew into the center of the room a small table that stood in the apartment, and mounted upon it. An examination of the ceiling proved it to be composed, as he had supposed, of thin canes, the common material used in the construction of ceilings in houses of tropical climes.

By the aid of his dagger, he succeeded in making an aperture large enough to admit his hand, which he at once inserted, and tore the cane from its place. He repeated this in rapid succession, until enough had been removed to admit the passage of his body.

At that moment another warning from the enemy without reached his ears. They commanded him to open the door once more, this time informing the young man that if he did not, they would soon open it themselves by the aid of fire.

Still the young man deigned not to reply; and he soon heard them making preparations to carry out their threat.

Henry Lorraine drew himself by the strength of his arms through the aperture he had made, and found himself in a somewhat spacious, but rather dark garret.

He told Therese to get upon the table as quickly as possible, which she accordingly did. He then seized her by the arms, and in a trice landed her in the garret beside him.

His next proceeding was to replace the canes he had removed, in order to the more readily baffle the enemy when they should enter the room, and find that their birds had flown.

Guided by his companion, young Lorraine found himself at the head of the stairs which would lead them into the passageway. These

they descended as quickly as possible. They had no fears about being heard; their enemies were making too loud a noise for that.

Emerging from the stairway into the passage, Henry hesitated for a moment which way to proceed next—in the direction of the cellar, or the garden in the rear of the house. He stood for some time considering which would be the safest, and had just made up his mind to secrete himself for a time in the cellar, when the sound of something caused him to quickly alter his intention. The sound was caused by the crackling of the flames the foe had started, as they licked up whatever came in their way.

"Come," said Henry, in as calm a tone as he could command, "the villains have fired the house. We must make a quick dash, or we are lost!"

Seizing the terrified girl by the hand, he led her to the end of the passage that looked out upon the garden. To his joy the enemy was either within, or else in front of the house. With a quick dash the young man knew that it was more than possible for them to reach the woods—some eighty rods away—before they would be perceived. He accordingly whispered a word of hope and encouragement to his young and beautiful companion—for whose sake he had risked his life—and bade her run at her swiftest speed.

CHAPTER XVI.

AGAIN A PRISONER.

THE words spoken in the young girl's ear were but useless, for terror produced an impression upon her far stronger than words could do.

Keeping close to her companion's side, she ran forward like a deer. Indeed, so terrific was their speed, that they reached the very border of the wood before the Spaniards perceived them.

The trees the wood contained were mostly of the ironwood or *lignum vitæ* species, large, and well adapted to conceal the fugitives from view.

"There," said Henry, pointing toward an old forest patriarch, whose trunk was partially concealed by thick masses of wild vine, "that will serve us for a time."

Approaching the tree, the young man drew the vines aside, wide enough to admit himself and companion, and stepped through the opening, she quickly imitating his example.

It was perhaps well for them that their movement were so quickly decided upon and executed; for scarcely a dozen seconds had elapsed from the time they had entered the wood, when their pursuers reached it, and, to the no small gratification of the fugitives, passed their place of concealment with a rush.

"Good!" ejaculated Henry. "They think we must have concealed ourselves further on."

For upward of one hour the two continued in their positions, fearing to stir lest the least movement might be sufficient to betray their whereabouts. Young Lorraine knew that the Spaniards could not have quitted the wood. He knew they had posted men in every part of it, and the least rustle would have been a sufficient cause for a search to be made. Suddenly, his ears detected the sound of footsteps approaching. He listened attentively. The sound of voices

reached him. Heavens! Could he be mistaken? No! He knew the voice too well for that. These were the words:

"I tell you, Rodrigo, I am not mistaken. They haven't left these woods. By all that's sacred and holy! I have set my mind upon that girl, and I'll have her. Ay, if I have to drive her from her covert, like we did from the house, by fire!"

The speaker had arrived opposite the spot where the fugitives were concealed. Henry slightly parted the vines and looked out. He had not been mistaken in his conjecture. The speaker was his cousin, Fred!

He turned toward Therese Hautville. She, too, heard the voice, and her face turned white as marble.

"What," she said, when the villain had passed beyond hearing. "Can it be possible that he whom I ever treated as a friend, and who for a hundred times has shared the hospitality of our house, has turned traitor? Never mind. I may live to one day find a reckoning for him!"

Her eyes, contrasting strangely with the marble-like whiteness of her face, shot forth from their dark depths flashes of fire, and her teeth were clinched together until she reminded her companion that beneath her beautiful exterior there was hidden the temper of a fiend. He knew from her manner that the words she had spoken were not likely to be forgotten. She would one day fulfill them.

An hour more must have passed—an hour of suspense and anxiety—when an incident occurred which proved, in the end, to be the cause of their escaping from their prison sooner than what they would have been likely to do, under different circumstances.

The young man was just in the act of taking another look through a slight aperture in the net-work of vines, when a noise, singularly like the grunt of a hog, caused him to pause.

Again the noise was heard, then again and again, until it sounded as if two hundred hogs were grunting at once.

But to the two fugitives, however, there was nothing strange in the noise. They knew well it was the grunt of the peccary.

A score of seconds later, a number of the animals—the vanguard of what were to come—appeared in sight, getting over the ground at a brisk run.

Soon they neared a Spaniard, who had been set on the lookout for the fugitives, and who, doubtless thinking to have a little sport, seized a large stick, and struck one of the little animals on the head. To the Spaniard's surprise and mortification, instead of running away, the rest of the little brutes, their tusks gnashing with rage, turned upon him.

Making a club of his musket, the Spaniard tried to keep them at bay. He succeeded in knocking over lifeless a few of his infuriated enemies, but instead of intimidating them, it only served to increase their fury. In vain the man used his weapon, kicked and jumped; every moment he was fast losing ground.

At last, perceiving this, he made a jump from the circle of tormentors, with which he was surrounded, and made a dash for his companions, the whole pack at his heels. He ran fast, and so

did they; and he no sooner reached the spot, where a number of his companions were, than the fierce little animals renewed the contest with more vigor than ever.

Surrounded on every side, the Spaniards fought desperately, at first feeling inclined to think an attack from such small antagonists merely a laughing matter.

But before long, however, their laughs began to give way to curses and fierce imprecations. In vain were dozens of the fierce creatures annihilated on the spot; their places were soon filled by as many others, each bent upon avenging the death of their comrades.

Had the Spaniards been acquainted with the habits of their antagonists, they would have known that a tree would serve as a refuge, for the peccary is no climber.

But, being entirely ignorant of the fact, they judged that it would be their best plan to take to their heels, which they did, giving vent to loud cries as they rushed from the cover of the wood into the open ground.

As in the preceding case, the peccaries still kept in pursuit, bent upon avenging their fallen comrades.

"Come, Mademoiselle Hautville," after witnessing this, "now is our time," said Henry. "We can gain the spot where I left a couple of friends without being discovered, I think. Thanks to those little animals!"

They quitted their retreat.

A circuitous walk of half a mile brought them to a piece of open ground, which, in order to reach the point for which the young man was aiming, would have to be crossed.

This was unfortunate, as the house, which had once been the home of Therese, but now a heap of smoking ruins, was not more than two hundred yards from them, and surrounding it were a dozen of the enemy. Judging from appearances, they must have, in some manner or other, outwitted the peccaries, for they were talking in a loud manner, and many of them boasting of the number they had succeeded in dispatching.

"There are but two ways that we can cross," said Henry, referring to the open piece of ground. "We must either do like we did when we left the house, make a quick dash, or else wait until it gets dark."

"If so, then," said Therese, "I should prefer the latter way. Remember, we were seen when we left the house, although we ran like deer."

"True," replied Henry, "but this is not more than quarter as wide as the other piece of ground. We run a great deal less risk in waiting for night, but I am afraid that my friends will feel anxious about me."

"Your friends?" asked Therese, a shade of suspicion crossing her mind. "What may be their names, M. Lorraine?"

"Oh!" said Henry, "I have no objections to tell you, since they are friends of yours, as well as mine. M. and Mademoiselle Woodville. I was at their house this morning when the Spaniards attacked it, and a difficult time we had of it in getting away, I assure you."

A spasm of jealousy seized hold of Therese Hautville, as she heard these words. She loved Henry Lorraine—though he was unskilled in

love's diplomacy enough not to know it—with a passion that at one time she would have thought herself incapable of.

However, she said in a calm tone:

"And so you mean to forsake me, and join your friends?"

"Mademoiselle Hautville," said the young man, "you wrong me! I have not said, nor have I meant to leave you. I simply remarked that my friends would feel anxious about me."

Hurt by his words, for in them she fancied she could detect a tone of contempt, she answered:

"Well, M. Lorraine, I will not detain you. Let us go."

With these words, and before her companion had time to interrupt her, she stepped boldly out from the cover of the woods into the opening.

"Come back!" ejaculated Henry. "Come back! You are mad! You will be seen!"

But, blinded by jealousy, she heeded not his words.

He seized her by her dress, and endeavored to draw her back.

Too late! A cry from the enemy told them they were discovered.

The cry brought Therese Hautville to her senses. She saw at once the fearful result of what she had done.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she cried out. "I am lost!"

In vain young Lorraine pointed out to her the danger of delay; in vain he entreated her to fly—she stood still, trembling in every limb.

Those in pursuit soon reached the spot. Young Lorraine had lingered too long. He could have escaped before, had he liked to have quitted his companion's side, but not now. The Spaniards, with fierce exclamations of triumph, surrounded them on every side, expecting on his part an easy surrender.

It was not until a dozen of the showily-garbed brethren of Don Quixote had measured themselves upon the ground—not until more than one head ached from the blows of their antagonist's clinched fists—that he found himself seized by a strong arm from behind, and himself powerless.

A pair of iron cuffs were soon forthcoming, and clasped around Henry's wrists with all the dexterity of an old and practiced hand.

"Ha!" said a voice, as soon as this was satisfactorily completed. "At last, cousin, we have met again. This time I shall personally see to your disposal. You won't escape quite as easily as before, I think."

"Traitor!" hissed Henry, the blood crowding the veins in his neck almost to bursting. "Traitor! I say!"

Fred winced under his words, but, making no reply, turned to Therese Hautville.

"Well, Therese," said the villain, seizing one of her hands in his, "I am astonished to find you in his company."

"Pardon me, M. Lorraine; those dreadful Spaniards terrified me. Had I known you were among them, the case would have been different."

She said this with such an appearance of honesty that Fred could not do otherwise than believe her.

"Well," he replied, "we will say nothing

more upon the subject now. I have a piece of news for you. Your father is to proceed at once to Spain."

"Ha! You surprise me."

"No doubt. He goes at the request of the king."

"Indeed! As a prisoner?"

"No," replied the villain. Gross as the lie was, it was uttered without a blush or the least hesitation.

Nevertheless, it did not deceive the young girl. She knew as well what was the cause of the visit the Spaniards had made, as if it had been fully explained to her. Besides, why had her father's dwelling been so ruthlessly destroyed?

Had Fred Lorraine known what were the feelings of her at his side, he would have shrunk from her as from a venomous serpent.

With the natural quickness of a woman, she had already made up her mind as to the course she was to pursue. The sight of the man whose love she yearned after standing before her a prisoner in the hands of one she detested, gave rise to feelings of deadly, undying vengeance.

She determined to keep near Henry Lorraine, cost her what it might, and, at the first opportunity, raise her arm and strike for his liberty.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BUCCANEERS! THE BUCCANEERS!

THEY took up their march for Port au Prince.

When they arrived there, it was very late in the afternoon.

The largest building in the city was that in which the *bal masque* had been held on the night on which Henry Lorraine had been taken prisoner by the Spaniards.

This building had now been appropriated by them as a temporary prison. They had decided to keep the prisoners they had succeeded in taking there until they evacuated the city, as their ships needed a thorough overhauling before commencing their homeward-bound voyage.

When Henry Lorraine and his captors arrived there, they found the building guarded on the outside by a dozen marines, who, as the party drew near, saluted the officer in command, and one or more opened a large and heavy door.

With a bow of mock politeness, the young man was requested to enter. He did so. To refuse would have been useless—to appear unwilling would have only embittered his foes more than already against him.

His captors perceived, by his dress and appearance, that he was different from the common class of people, and they therefore assigned him a room to himself, not forgetting, however, to place a guard on the outside. The young man no sooner found himself alone, than the thought which is ever uppermost in the mind of a prisoner in a similar situation took possession of him. How could he effect his escape?

Had the bracelets of steel which encircled his wrists been the only drawbacks, he would have freed himself on the instant. He perceived that his thick wrists and slender hands again stood him in service; he could slip them in an instant.

But the guard he could plainly hear on the

watch outside, as he slowly paced to and from the door—that was the great obstacle.

There was no window in the room, or, had there been, the undertaking would not have looked so formidable.

Henry perceived all this, and had about resolved to let things take their course, come what would, when an idea flashed across his troubled brain like a meteor.

He remembered how he had escaped with Therese Hautville from the room in her father's house—by the ceiling. Why could he not escape from the room he now occupied in the same manner?

His captors, seeing no weapons in his hand at the time of his capture, had not deemed it necessary to search him. His poniard was still in his belt.

He listened.

The guard on the outside was still slowly pacing to and fro. The young man quickly slipped one of his wrists from the cuffs, and the next instant his hand grasped his poniard. Then, with its sharp point, he began to pick off pieces from the ceiling, in order to make an aperture wide enough to admit his hand. The pieces he split off he was careful to catch in his hat, in order that they would not betray him, should any one enter. The tough cane did not readily yield, but little by little the steel effected its design, until the aperture was large enough to accomplish the young man's purpose. He forced his hand through, and grasped hold of a cane. It did not yield. His heart sunk. Desperation seized him, and he gave the obstinate cane a fierce wrench. This was sufficient to do the work. He was now confident of success.

Emptying his sombrero of chips into one of his pockets, he sat down, to wait until it was night, feeling in no small degree elated by his success. And well he might, for he had the genius of either the detective Vidocq, or else the much-abused Baron Trenk.

Two hours or more must have passed, when Henry's ears were greeted by the sound of approaching footsteps. The door was presently opened, and the figure of Fred Lorraine presented itself.

The miscreant held in his hand a lamp, lit, and which served to light up the devilish aspect his face wore. Though a man young in years, Fred Lorraine was old in crime. His face wore many a deep line, and each of those lines had a history—a history of deeds at which he, in his moments of remorse, himself shuddered.

"Well, Henry," he said, in a kind tone, "I have come to pay you a last visit. I suppose you are well acquainted what your fate will be?"

"It is not likely," returned Henry, in a cool tone.

"Well, I will inform you. You are to be taken to Spain."

There was no reply.

"Yes," continued the miscreant, "unless you escape, you will be taken to Spain. But"—and his voice became earnest—"it depends entirely upon yourself whether you escape or not. I have the power, if I so choose, to free you this very moment."

He paused.

"Proceed," said Henry.

"I will. Deliver me that letter, and I will set you at liberty."

"What! Villain!" cried Henry Lorraine, his anger getting the mastery over him. "Is it possible that, notwithstanding the gold you have received from your country's foes for turning traitor, that your base mind still grasps for money?"

"How know you that I have received money from the Spaniards?"

"I know it is so. Let that suffice."

"Well, obstinate devil, I will. But do you, or do you not agree to my proposition? I demand an answer?"

For a few moments, Henry was silent, but his brain was busily at work. He had his father's letter in his breast-pocket. Should he yield it up, and thus purchase his liberty? True, he might escape in the direction he had thought to do before Fred's entrance; but, also there were many drawbacks to that.

Further, he knew that if he did not surrender up the letter willingly, Fred would not scruple to search for it on his person, and that must inevitably lead to the discovery of the chips in his pocket. Then, of course, would that game be lost.

"You swear on your honor as a Christian, Fred Lorraine, that if I give you that letter, you will set me at liberty?"

"I do most solemnly," replied Fred his greedy eyes glittering as he spoke the words.

"I accept the terms, then. Feel in my breast-pocket. The letter—"

Before he had time to finish the sentence, Fred was at his side, and had plunged his hand into Henry's pocket.

An instant's time sufficed for him to grasp the letter, and draw it forth. He approached the lamp, and by its light assured himself that the letter was the one he sought. Then turning to Henry, he said:

"You have not deceived me, and rest assured, I will keep my promise."

"Very well. I suppose I am free, then?"

"No," answered the villain, "not exactly yet. Before I set you at liberty, I must first secure the treasure mentioned in your father's letter, for, if I freed you now, you might interfere."

Completely overwhelmed by his ingratitude, Henry Lorraine could not, for a moment, speak. Fred, seeing this, concealed the letter about him, and stepped toward the door. But, before he had time to open it, Henry recovered himself enough to say:

"Fred, will you answer me a question?"

"I will," was the answer.

"Are M. Woodville and M. Hautville prisoners here?"

"Only M. Hautville. M. Woodville is not to be found."

"Thank God!" murmured Henry. "That is all I wish to know," he added, aloud.

Fred opened the door, and made his exit.

"Villain! Deep, cursed villain!" said Henry, as soon as the traitor had disappeared. "He means to dig up my treasure and then escape to some foreign country. But, with God's help, I'll thwart him yet. I care not for the letter

now, for I know every line it contains by heart!"

An hour more passed. The young man knew that it must be near the hour of eleven.

A few moments ago the guard outside had looked for an instant into the room to see that his prisoner was safe, but the door was now closed and fastened again.

The young man rose from his crouched position, and slipped off the handcuffs. The room was dark as pitch, but a second's search with his hand revealed to him the whereabouts of the aperture he had made. With no small amount of exertion, he succeeded in removing enough of the canes to make an opening sufficiently large to admit the passage of his body.

Then, with the strength and dexterity of a practical gymnast, he drew himself up until he could throw his feet into the room above, followed quickly by the rest of his body.

Thanks to the rain, which was now falling in torrents, he discovered that he was near the roof of the building.

To escape by that would be the least dangerous way, so he set at once to work with his poniard. The roof was composed of material which very soon yielded to the blows of the weapon, and Henry had the gratification of feeling the cool rain, as it dashed into his heated face. He gained the roof. The night was dark as Egypt, but he succeeded in finding his way to the eaves without difficulty, as the roof was flat.

How was he to reach the ground? There was but one way in which it could be done, and that was by jumping. The roof, as is the case with all buildings in a tropical country, was not high, and the leap could be made without danger.

He listened. All below was quiet. His escape, then, was still undiscovered.

He hesitated only a moment; then leaped into the darkness. He came to the ground with a dull, heavy thud. He attempted to rise, and found, to his no small discomfiture, that he had been unfortunate enough to sprain his ankle. He could still walk, but every step sent a thrill of intense pain through him.

But this was not the worst.

At the moment he rose to his feet, one of the guards, who had heard the thud caused by the prisoner's jump to the earth, and, half-suspecting the reason, called out in French:

"Halt!"

Of course, the order was not obeyed. Henry knew they could not perceive him, and determined to risk a shot, rather than surrender himself without a struggle.

A second later, and the report of a musket was heard, but the bullet flew wide of its mark.

The report put the other sentinels on the alert. Soon a dozen, some with lighted torches, were rushing about the outside of the building, in order to ascertain in what direction the fugitive had gone.

Henry was well acquainted with his whereabouts. He knew that he was in a garden at the rear of the building, and which was surrounded by a high fence. In this garden was a huge iron-wood tree, in the branches of which seats had been placed by its owner, and whose foliage would serve to conceal the fugitive. He knew

that, if he could succeed in reaching this before his pursuers overtook him, he could easily elude them.

Thanks to the torches his enemies bore, he was enabled to find his way more easily than he would have done, had it been entirely dark. In the middle of the garden there was a fountain, surrounded by a circle of young saplings. The fugitive had no sooner reached here, than, by some means or other, his pursuers caught sight of him.

Perceiving this, Henry Lorraine, unmindful now of the pain caused by his injured ankle, leaped into the artificial pond that surrounded the fountain, waded through the water as fast as possible, and gained the other side.

A few paces from there stood the tree which he had been aiming to reach. He succeeded, and hurriedly ascending its trunk, was soon secure from his pursuers.

The Spaniards searched every inch of ground in the garden, but, of course, their pains went unrewarded. Finally, they extinguished their torches, and left the grounds, evidently intending to renew their search in the morning.

Henry Lorraine no sooner perceived this, than he lay down upon one of the benches which had been—for some unaccountable reason—placed among the branches of the mammoth tree, in order to obtain an hour's rest. By this time, the rain had ceased to fall. But, owing to the extreme fatigue which he had undergone, he slept heavily. Hour after hour glided by, but still he slumbered.

How long he would have continued thus is impossible to say, had he not been awakened by the unexpected roar of a cannon.

The young man raised himself up, and listened. Had he only been dreaming? No. Again the roar of the cannon broke the silence.

What could it mean? Could it be that the Spaniards had again opened fire upon the city. The thing was improbable, if not impossible.

It wanted yet an hour to daybreak; consequently, the earth was still enshrouded in darkness.

A few moments after the discharge of the second cannon, loud cries and yells reached the young man's ears. Presently, these became louder and more distinct.

Each successive moment the yells increased. Lights were seen flashing along the lately-deserted streets, and men in companies and alone were running along them like madmen.

Henry Lorraine was not long ere he divined the cause. It was the buccaneers! They had returned, and already was their dreaded presence being felt by their foes.

By this time, the young man's ankle was entirely free from pain, and he was not long in descending to the ground, and reaching the fence which inclosed the garden. This he scaled, and found himself in one of the streets. He turned to the right, and ran briskly along until he was met by a score or more of men—each dressed in the garb of a seaman.

He was not long in recognizing three of them as belonging once to the ill-fated Achilles. They, too, knew him; and warm greetings on both sides were soon being exchanged.

The young man learned from them that a

furious storm had arisen, sinking a number of the buccaneer vessels, thus making their expedition against Porto Bello a failure. This caused Montbars to order the expedition back to Port au Prince. On reaching the harbor, they at once perceived, of course, what had happened, and a fierce attack upon the Spanish vessels had taken place. So unexpected was this, that the vessels were taken without the loss of a single buccaneer.

"Come," said Henry, after he had listened to the recital, "there is work for you yet."

Nothing loth, the band of buccaneers followed him. He led them on until they arrived at the building where the prisoners were confined, the main entrance being guarded by a few Spanish mariners.

These were struck down, and the buccaneers, headed by Henry Lorraine, rushed into the building.

Little dreaming that their hour of deliverance was so near, the prisoners were still drowning their misery in sleep. Most of the doors that led to the apartments in which they had been placed, were locked and barred. But the freebooters, with wild oaths and exclamations of vengeance against their enemies, the Spaniards, battered them down one after another in rapid succession.

Among the prisoners, Henry Lorraine noticed M. Hautville. The sight of him caused the young man to forget for a moment what was transpiring around him, and think of Valma and Therese. He doubted not that his beloved Valma was safe. But Therese; where was she?

Along with the prisoners, who rushed with joyful cries outside, Henry found himself once more in the street. There, in the middle of the public square, a deadly conflict was going on. The combatants were two in number. They were Montbars and Fred Lorraine. Standing a few feet apart from them was the beautiful form of Therese Hautville. She was as calm and collected as if she were but witnessing a play; and Henry Lorraine imagined that he could even detect upon her lips a slight smile.

Both antagonists fought with the same weapons—swords.

Up to this moment Montbars had received the worst of the fight, for Fred Lorraine, whatever were his faults, was an excellent swordsman. On one of the buccaneer's cheeks was a cut, from which issued a small stream of blood.

The combat was of short duration.

By a dextrous movement of his weapon, Montbars at length succeeded in parrying a dangerous lunge made by his antagonist, and, before Fred could recover himself, the buccaneer's sword had passed through his body.

Without even a groan, the traitor fell upon his face. Henry Lorraine, out of humanity alone, ran to seize him. He turned his ill-fated cousin on his back, and gazed into his face. Fred Lorraine had drawn his last breath of life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

A FEW words more and we have done.

The day after the death of Fred Lorraine, Henry found his beloved Valma in the house of the negro woman, where he had left her when

he had gone to the assistance of Therese Hautville. That night, he again repaired to the "Robber's Cavern," and the following day saw him in safe possession of the riches left to him by his father.

Soon after the young man and Valma Woodville were made one, the wedding party they gave being the most magnificent one that ever took place in Port au Prince.

As for Therese, after enjoying for a year or two "the sweets of single life," she married a young Port au Prince merchant. Montbars, believing her to have loved Fred Lorraine, never again saw her after the death of his rival.

As for Montbars, he soon after gave up the life of a buccaneer, and returned to his native home France.

THE END.

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